三国志 ㉖

赤壁の戦い

横山光輝

希望コミックス82

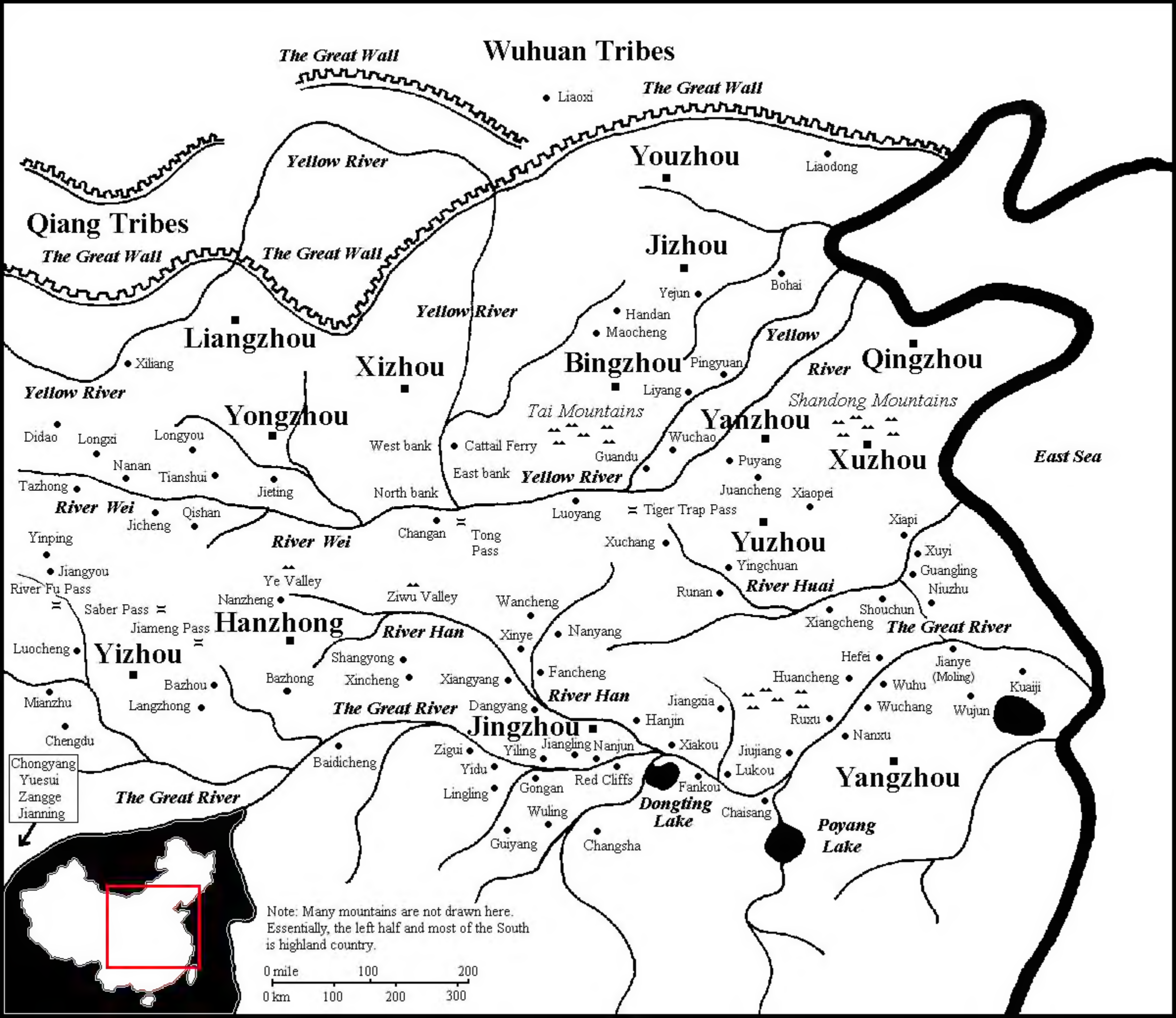
SANGOKUSHI

21

BATTLE OF RED CLIFFS

ZHUGE LIANG KONGMING

YOKOYAMA MITSUTERU


Wuhuan Tribes
The Great Wall
The Great Wall
Liaoxi
Youzhou
Liaodong
Yellow River
Qiang Tribes
The Great Wall
The Great Wall
Jizhou
Bohai
Yejun
Handan
Maocheng
Yellow River
Liangzhou
Xizhou
Bingzhou
Pingyuan
Yellow River
Qingzhou
Xiliang
Yellow River
Liyang
Shandong Mountains
Tai Mountains
Yongzhou
Yanzhou
Didao
Longxi
Longyou
West bank
Cattail Ferry
Wuchao
Guandu
Xuzhou
East Sea
Nanan
East bank
Yellow River
Puyang
Tianshui
Tazhong
Jieting
North bank
Juancheng
Xiaopei
River Wei
Qishan
Luoyang
Tiger Trap Pass
Jicheng
Changan
Tong Pass
Xiapi
Yuzhou
Yinping
River Wei
Xuchang
Xuyi
Jiangyou
Ye Valley
Yingchuan
Guangling
River Fu Pass
Ziwu Valley
Runan
River Huai
Niuzhu
Saber Pass
Nanzheng
Wancheng
Shouchun
Jiameng Pass
Hanzhong
River Han
Xinye
Nanyang
Xiangcheng
The Great River
Luocheng
Yizhou
Shangyong
Hefei
Jianye (Moling)
Fancheng
Huancheng
Bazhou
Bazhong
Xincheng
Xiangyang
Wuhu
Kuaiji
River Han
Jiangxia
Mianzhu
Langzhong
The Great River
Dangyang
Wuchang
Wujun
Ruxu
Hanjin
Jingzhou
Chengdu
Nanxu
Zigui
Yiling
Jiangling
Nanjun
Xiakou
Jiujiang
Baidicheng
Yidu
Lukou
Yangzhou
Chongyang
Yuesui
Zangge
Jianning
Red Cliffs
Fankou
Gongan
Lingling
Dongting Lake
Chaisang
Wuling
Poyang Lake
Guiyang
Changsha
The Great River
Note: Many mountains are not drawn here.
Essentially, the left half and most of the South
is highland country.
0 mile 100 200
0 km 100 200 300

SANGOKUSHI'S CAST OF CHARACTERS

PART 1: CHARACTERS TO KEEP IN MIND

CAO CAO MENGDE:
THE AMBITIOUS AND MACHIAVELLIAN HERO OF SANGOKUSHI. HAVING BECOME THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN, HE HAS RELEGATED EMPEROR XIAN AS A MERE PUPPET RULER.

CHEN DENG:
THE SON OF CHEN GUI AND FORMERLY TAO QIAN OF XUZHOU'S SUBORDINATE. HE AND HIS FATHER SUCCESSFULLY PLOTTED LU BU'S DOWNFALL.

CHEN GUI:
FATHER OF CHEN DENG WHO SUCCESSFULLY PLOTTED LU BU'S DOWNFALL. DESPITE SECRETLY WORKING TOGETHER WITH LIU BEI AGAINST CAO CAO, CAO CAO SPARES HIS LIFE AND ALLOWS HIM TO CONTINUE LIVING IN XUZHOU.

CHENG GONG:
A CITY GUARD CAPTAIN WHO ARRESTED CAO CAO, ONLY TO FREE AND ESCAPE WITH HIM AFTER SYMPATHIZING WITH HIS STORY. HOWEVER, HE LATER DEFECTS TO LU BU AND SERVES AS HIS ADVISOR. IN VOLUME 14, HE IS EXECUTED ALONG WITH LU BU.

EMPRESS HE:
ORIGINALY A PEASANT, HER BEAUTY WAS NOTICED BY THE TEN ATTENDANTS WHO THEN PRESENTED HER TO EMPEROR LING. SHE SOON BECAME EMPEROR LING'S FAVOURITE CONSORT AND GAVE BIRTH TO PRINCE LIU BIAN. HOWEVER, SHE AND HER SON WERE REMOVED FROM POWER AND KILLED BY DONG ZHUO WHEN HE CAME TO POWER.

DIAN WEI:
CAO CAO'S PERSONAL BODYGUARD, RENOWNED FOR HIS STRENGTH. HE IS ALSO KNOWN BY THE NICKNAME, "E LAI," IN REFERENCE TO THE MIGHTY GENERAL OF THE SAME NAME WHO SERVED UNDER KING ZHOU OF SHANG. IN VOLUME 12, HE WAS KILLED DURING ZHANG XIU'S PLOT TO KILL CAO CAO.

DIAO CHAN:
A SLAVE GIRL OF WANG YUN, WHO RAISED HER AS HIS OWN DAUGHTER. SHE AND WANG YUN PLOTTED TO DISTANCE LU BU FROM DONG ZHUO BY HAVING HER SEDUCE BOTH MEN. IN VOLUME 8, SHE COMMITTED SUICIDE AFTER ACCOMPLISHING HER GOAL.

DONG CHENG:
ELDER STATESMAN OF HAN WHO IS EMPEROR XIAN'S CONFIDANT. EMPEROR XIAN SECRETELY ASKS HIM TO ELIMINATE CAO CAO, WHO NOW RULES THE IMPERIAL COURT AS CHANCELLOR. IN VOLUME 17, HE IS EXECUTED AFTER HIS ASSASSINATION PLOT IS FOUND OUT BY CAO CAO.

DONG ZHUO:
GOVERNOR OF LIANGZHOU WHO LATER SEIZED CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND SEATED HIMSELF AS THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN, BECOMING AN INFAMOUS TYRANT. IN VOLUME 8, HE IS BETRAYED AND KILLED BY HIS RIGHT-HAND MAN, LU BU.

GAN NING:
FORMER-PIRATE WHO IS NOW A FIRECE GENERAL OF WU.

GONGSUN ZAN:
GOVERNOR OF BEIPING AND FRIEND TO LIU BEI. HE WAGES WAR AGAINST YUAN SHAO AFTER THE LATTER TRICKS HIM AND KILLS HIS YOUNG BROTHER. IN VOLUME 15, YUAN SHAO'S ARMY CONQUERS BEIPING, CAUSING GONGSUN ZAN TO COMMIT SUICIDE.

GUAN YU YUNCHANG:
SWORN YOUNGER BROTHER TO LIU BEI AND SWORN OLDER BROTHER TO ZHANG FEI. HE IS AS FIERCE AS GUAN YU BUT IS MORE RESTRAINED AND CALM IN HIS MANNERISMS.

GUAN PING:
GUAN YU'S ADOPTED SON WHO FIRST APPEARS IN VOLUME 19.

GUO JIA:
THE TALENTED STRATEGIST AND ADVISOR TO CAO CAO. HE DIES FROM ILLNESS DURING CAO CAO'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE YUAN FAMILY (UNSHOWN IN MANGA).

JIA XU:
THE SHREWD STRATEGIST AND ADVISOR TO ZHANG XIU. HE AND ZHANG XIU PLOTS A FAILED ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON CAO CAO, BUT SUCCEEDS IN KILLING DIAN WEI. IN VOLUME 16, HE AND ZHANG XIU DEFECT TO CAO CAO'S SIDE.

LI RU:
CUNNING ADVISOR TO DONG ZHUO. WITH HIS ADVICE, DONG ZHUO FIRMLY SECURES HIS SEAT AS THE CHANCELLOR OF HAN. IN VOLUME 8, HE IS KILLED ALONG WITH DONG ZHUO WHEN LU BU REBELS.

LIU BEI XUANDE:
THE CENTRAL CHARACTER OF SANGOKUSHI. A KIND AND VIRTUOUS MAN, SAID TO BE THE DESCENDANT OF EMPEROR JING OF HAN. HE HAS SWORN AN OATH OF BROTHERHOOD WITH GUAN YU AND ZHANG FEI.

LIU BIAO:
THE GOVERNOR OF JINGZHOU. HE PASSES AWAY DUE TO SICKNESS IN VOLUME 22.

LIU XIE (EMPEROR XIAN OF HAN):
FORMERLY KNOWN AS PRINCE OF CHENLIU, HE IS THE CURRENT EMPEROR OF HAN, THOUGH CAO CAO HAS SEIZED ALL REAL POWER AWAY FROM HIM.

LU BU:
HE IS SAID TO BE THE STRONGEST WARRIOR WITH THE FASTEST HORSE, THE RED HARE. IN VOLUME 14, HE WAS BETRAYED BY HIS SUBORDINATES, AND EXECUTED BY CAO CAO.

LU SU:
MILITARY GENERAL AND ADVISOR OF WU.

MA TENG:
GOVERNOR OF XILIANG AND FATHER OF MA CHAO. UNLIKE THE ACTUAL HISTORICAL FIGURE, HE IS DEPICTED AS A HAN LOYALIST WHO SIGNS DONG CHENG'S BLOOD SEAL PLEDGE.

PANG TONG SHIYUAN:
NICKNAMED THE YOUNG PHOENIX (FENGCHU), HE IS A MASTERFUL STRATEGIST WHO STUDIED UNDER SHUI JING, ALONG WITH ZHUGE LIANG AND XU SHU. HE CURRENTLY SERVES NO LORD BUT ASSISTS WU IN THE BATTLE OF RED CLIFFS.

SHUI JING:
HIS REAL NAME IS SIMA HUI BUT HE IS MORE COMMONLY KNOWN BY HIS TAOIST NAME, SHUI JING (MEANING WATER MIRROR). HE IS THE TEACHER OF ZHUGE LIANG, PANG TONG, AND XU SHU.

SUN CE:
ELDEST SON OF SUN JIAN. IN VOLUME 19, ASSASSINS MAKE A FAILED ATTEMPT AT HIS LIFE. HIS MENTAL HEALTH SOON DETERIORATES DUE TO THE INCIDENT WITH YU JI AND HE SUCCUMBS TO DEATH.

SUN JIAN:
BORN IN WU COMMANDERY, HE WAS THE GOVERNOR OF CHANGSHA. HE PARTICIPATES IN THE ALLIANCE TO BRING DOWN DONG ZHUO. BUT IS FINDING OF THE IMPERIAL SEAL CAUSES LIU BIAO AND YUAN SHAO TO TURN ON HIM. IN VOLUME 7, HE TRIES TO EXACT HIS REVENGE ON LIU BIAO, ONLY TO BE KILLED IN BATTLE.

SUN QUAN:
YOUNGER BROTHER OF SUN CE AND THE CURRENT RULER OF WU, A REGION IN SOUTHERN CHINA.

TAISHI CI:
SUN CE'S TRUSTED GENERAL WHO DEFECTED TO SERVE SUN CE AFTER BEING CAPTURED IN VOLUME 11.

TAO QIAN:
THE KIND GOVERNOR OF XUZHOU WHO ACCIDENTALLY INVOKES CAO CAO'S WRATH WHEN HIS DISLOYAL SUBORDINATE ZHANG KAI KILLS CAO CAO'S FATHER, CAO SONG.

THE TEN ATTENDANTS:
A CORRUPT GROUP OF 10 EUNUCHS WHO WERE THE HIGHEST RANKING MINISTERS OF THE IMPERIAL COURT. THEY SUCCEEDED IN ASSASSINATING GENERAL HE JIN BUT WERE LATER KILLED BY HE JIN'S ARMY LED BY YUAN SHAO.

WANG YUN:
AN OLD MAN WHO HOLDS THE POST OF MINISTER OF THE MASSES, ONE OF THE 3 HIGHEST RANKING POSTS IN HAN IMPERIAL COURT. HE SUCCESSFULLY PLOTS DONG ZHUO'S DOWNFALL USING DIAO CHANG IN VOLUME 8. HOWEVER, HE IS LATER KILLED BY REMNANTS OF DONG ZHUO'S ARMY (UNSHOWN IN MANGA).

WEN CHOU:
HE AND YANG LIANG ARE YUAN SHAO'S TWO STRONGEST GENERALS. IN VOLUME 18, HE IS AMBUSHED BY CAO CAO'S ARMY AND KILLED BY GUAN YU.

XIAHOU DUN:
TRUSTED GENERAL OF CAO CAO. HE LOST HIS LEFT EYE DURING A BATTLE AGAINST LU BU'S ARMY IN VOLUME 13.

XU CHU:
TRUSTED GENERAL OF CAO CAO. ORIGINALY A PEASANT, HE WAS RECRUITED BY CAO CAO WHO WAS IMPRESSED AFTER SEEING XU CHU'S DUEL WITH DIAN WEI.

XU SHU (SHAN FU):
THE TALENTED STRATEGIST WHO STUDIED UNDER SHUI JING. AFTER A BRIEF STINT OF SERVING LIU BEI, HE IS TRICKED INTO COMING TO XUCHANG AND SERVING CAO CAO (VOLUME 21).

XUN YU:
ONE OF CAO CAO'S MOST TALENTED ADVISORS.

YAN LIANG:
HE AND WEN CHOU ARE YUAN SHAO'S TWO STRONGEST GENERALS. IN VOLUME 17, HE WAS KILLED BY GUAN YU WHILE FIGHTING CAO CAO'S ARMY AT BAIMA.

YI JI:
AN ADVISOR TO LIU BIAO WHO WARNS LIU BEI ABOUT CAI MAO'S PLOT TO ASSASSINATE LIU BEI IN VOLUME 20.

YUAN SHAO:
OLDER BROTHER OF YUAN SHU AND THE GOVERNOR OF JIZHOU. AFTER MANY YEARS OF WARRING AGAINST CAO CAO FOR CONTROL OF NORTHERN CHINA, HE AND HIS FAMILY IS DEFEATED AND KILLED.

YUAN SHU:
YOUNGER BROTHER OF YUAN SHAO AND THE GOVERNOR OF NANYANG. AFTER RECEIVING THE IMPERIAL SEAL FROM SUN CE, HE DECLARES HIMSELF AS THE EMPEROR OF ZHONG DYNASTY. IN VOLUME 15, HE DIES OF THIRST AFTER BEING ON THE RUN FROM LIU BEI AND CAO CAO'S ARMIES.

ZHANG FEI YIDE:
A FIRECE, SHORT-TEMPERED WARRIOR WHO IS THE SWORN YOUNGER BROTHER OF LIU BEI AND GUAN YU.

ZHANG LIAO:
ONE OF CAO CAO'S TOP GENERALS. HE WAS FORMERLY LU BU'S SUBORDINATE BUT DEFECTED TO CAO CAO AFTER THE FORMER'S EXECUTION.

ZHANG XIU:
LORD OF WANCHENG WHO ATTEMPTED TO KILL CAO CAO DURING THE BATTLE OF WANCHENG IN VOLUME 12. AFTER YEARS OF CONFLICT AGAINST CAO CAO, HE FINALLY DECIDES TO DEFECT TO CAO CAO IN VOLUME 16.

ZHAO YUN ZILONG:
A FORMER RETAINER TO YUAN SHAO WHO LATER DEFECTED TO SERVE GONGSUN ZAN. AFTER GONGSUN ZAN'S DEATH, HE LATER MEETS UP WITH LIU BEI AND FINALLY BECOMES HIS RETAINER.

ZHOU CANG:
FORMERLY A YELLOW TURBAN, HE MEETS GUAN YU IN VOLUME 18 AND BECOMES HIS SUBORDINATE.

ZHOU YU GONGJIN:
SWORN BROTHER OF SUN CE, HE IS A SKILLED ADMIRAL WHO SERVES AS THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF FOR WU'S ARMY. CONVINCED THAT HIS ALLY KONGMING IS TOO MUCH OF A THREAT, HE CURRENTLY SCHEMES FOR HIS DEATH.

ZHUGE LIANG KONGMING:
MASTERFUL STRATEGIST AND FORMER STUDENT OF SHUI JING. IN VOLUME 21, HE YIELDS TO LIU BEI'S PERSISTENCE AND DECIDES TO BECOME HIS SUBJECT.

SANGOKUSHI'S CAST OF CHARACTERS
PART 2: OTHER MINOR CHARACTERS

CAI MAO:
FORMER GENERAL OF LIU BIAO, WHO BECAME THE SUPREME ADMIRAL OF WEI'S NAVY WHEN JINGZHOU SURRENDERED TO CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 25, HE IS FRAMED BY ZHOU YU'S PLOT AND THUS EXECUTED BY CAO CAO.

CAO REN:
GENERAL SERVING UNDER CAO CAO.

CAO HONG:
GENERAL AND COUSIN TO CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 6, HE SAVES CAO CAO FROM CERTAIN DEATH.

CAO SONG:
CAO CAO'S FATHER AND A FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL. IN VOLUME 8, HE IS KILLED BY TAO QIAN'S ESCORT AND FORMER YELLOW TURBAN, ZHANG KAI.

DING YUAN:
GOVERNOR OF BINGZHOU AND LU BU'S FOSTER-FATHER. HE OBJECTED TO DONG ZHUO'S SCHEME TO PLACE PRINCE CHENLIU AS THE EMPEROR OF HAN, EARNING DONG ZHUO'S WRATH. IN VOLUME 4, HE IS BETRAYED AND KILLED BY HIS FOSTER-SON, LU BU, WHO THEN DEFECTS TO SERVE DONG ZHUO.

EMPRESS DOWAGER DONG:
MOTHER TO THE FORMER EMPEROR LING AND GRANDMOTHER TO EMPEROR XIAN. IN VOLUME 3, EMPRESS HE ORDERS FOR HER DEATH TO SECURE HER SON LIU BIAN'S THRONE AS THE NEXT EMPEROR OF HAN.

GAO SHUN:
ONE OF LU BU'S TRUSTED GENERALS. HE IS EXECUTED ALONG WITH HIS LORD IN VOLUME 14.

GUO SI:
A GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED DONG ZHUO. AFTER DONG ZHUO'S DEATH, HE AND LI JUE TOOK CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND DID AS THEY PLEASED UNTIL THE EMPEROR RUNS TO CAO CAO FOR PROTECTION.

HUANG GAI:
LOYAL GENERAL OF WU, WHOSE FAMILY HAS SERVED THE SUN FAMILY FOR THREE GENERATIONS.

HE JIN:
OLDER BROTHER OF EMPRESS HE. ORIGINALLY A SIMPLE BUTCHER, HE BECAME A GENERAL WHEN HIS YOUNGER SISTER BECAME EMPEROR LING'S CONSORT. IN VOLUME 3, HE ATTEMPTS TO ELIMINATE THE TEN ATTENDANTS, ONLY TO BE DISSUADED FROM DOING SO BY HIS YOUNGER SISTER. HE IS LATER KILLED BY THE TEN ATTENDANTS.

HOU CHENG:
ONE OF LU BU'S GENERALS. IN VOLUME 14, HE, ALONG WITH GENERALS WEI XU AND SONG XIAN, BETRAYS LU BU AND DEFECTS TO CAO CAO'S SIDE.

HUA XIONG:
FAMED GENERAL SERVING UNDER DONG ZHUO. IN VOLUME 5, HE DEFEATS SUN JIAN'S ARMY BUT IS LATER KILLED BY GUAN YU.

JI PING:
IMPERIAL PHYSICIAN OF HAN WHO, WITH DONG CHENG, PLOTS TO POISON CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 17, CAO CAO DISCOVERS THEIR PLOT AND EXECUTES HIM.

JIANG GAN:
CHILDHOOD FRIEND OF ZHOU YU AND NOW AN ADVISOR TO CAO CAO. IN VOLUME 25, HE FAILS TO PERSUADE ZHOU YU TO DEFECT TO CAO CAO, AND INADVERTANTLY HELPS ZHOU YU'S PLOT TO FRAME CAI MAO.

JIANG QIN:
FORMERLY A BANDIT ALONG WITH ZHOU TAI, BUT BECAME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE OUT OF ADMIRATION FOR SUN CE'S FATHER, SUN JIAN.

LADY FUYOU:
FICTIONAL CHARACTER CREATED BY MITSUTERU YOKOYAMA AND LIU BEI'S FIRST LOVE. ZHANG FEI FORMERLY SERVED HER FAMILY, WHO WERE MASSCRED BY THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELS.

LADY MI:
LIU BEI'S FIRST WIFE.

LI JUE:
A GENERAL WHO FORMERLY SERVED DONG ZHUO. AFTER DONG ZHUO'S DEATH, HE AND GUO SI TOOK CONTROL OF LUOYANG AND DID AS THEY PLEASED UNTIL THE EMPEROR RUNS TO CAO CAO FOR PROTECTION.

LI DIAN:
SCHOLARLY GENERAL UNDER THE SERVICE OF CAO CAO.

LIU BIAN:
THE SON OF EMPRESS HE AND BRIEFLY THE EMPEROR OF HAN AFTER THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER, EMPEROR LING. IN VOLUME 4, HE WAS DEPOSED BY DONG ZHUO AND LATER KILLED ALONG WITH HIS MOTHER BY LI RU.

LIU FENG:
LIU BEI'S ADOPTED SON. ORIGINALLY THE NEPHEW OF LIU MI, HE WAS ADOPTED BY LIU BEI WHO TOOK A LIKING TO HIM IN VOLUME 21.

LIU QI:
ELDEST SON OF LIU BIAO AND THE OLDER BROTHER OF LIU CONG.

MI ZHU:
ONE OF LIU BEI'S ADVISORS.

SUN QIAN:
ADVISOR/EMISSARY SERVING LIU BEI. (HIS ROLE IS MUCH SMALLER IN SANGOKUSHI COMPARED TO THE ORIGINAL NOVEL.)

YU JIN:
GENERAL SERVING CAO CAO. (IN RECORDS OF THE THRE KINGDOMS, WRITTEN BY CHEN SHOU, YU JIN IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE FIVE TOP GENERALS FOR WEI.)

LU ZHI:
LIU BEI'S FORMER TEACHER AND THE PALACE COMMANDER WHO WAS PLACED IN CHARGE OF LEADING THE HAN ARMY AGAINST THE YELLOW TURBANS. HE WAS LATER DEMOTED FOR FAILING TO BRIBE ONE OF THE IMPERIAL MESSENGERS.

ZHANG BAO:
ZHANG JIAO'S YOUNGER BROTHER AND THE YELLOW TURBAN'S GENERAL OF THE LAND. HE WAS KILLED BY LIU BEI IN VOLUME 2.

ZHANG JIAO:
LEADER OF THE YELLOW TURBAN REBELLION. HE PASSED AWAY DUE TO ILLNESS IN VOLUME 3.

ZHANG ZHAO/ZHANG HONG:
THE TWO GENIUSES OF JIANGDONG, ALSO KNOWN AS THE "TWO ZHANGS." AFTER SUN CE'S ADMANT INSISTENCE, THEY DECIDE TO SERVE HIM AND HELP HIS CAMPAIGN TO CONQUER JIANGNAN AND JIANGDONG.

ZHOU TAI:
FORMERLY A BANDIT ALONG WITH JIANG QIN BUT BECAME SUN CE'S SUBORDINATE OUT OF ADMIRATION FOR HIS FATHER, SUN JIAN.

SANGOKUSHI (ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS)

三国志

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BATTLE OF RED CLIFFS

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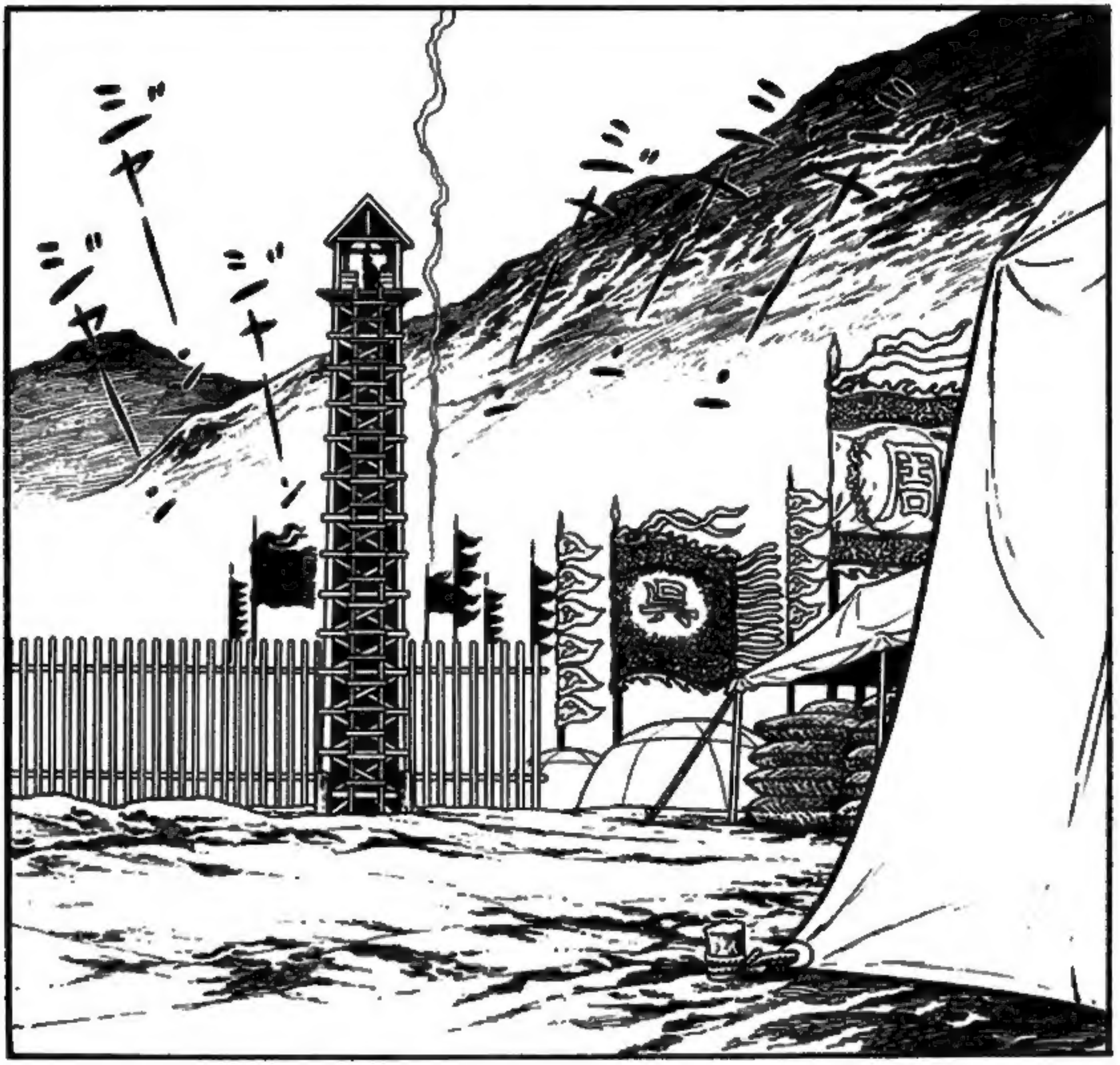
GUST



AGAIN!?

WEI'S FLEET HAS BEEN SPOTTED, ADMIRAL!

AGHHHH!

I MAY HAVE BEEN A FLEET ADMIRAL FOR OVER 10 YEARS NOW BUT I HAVE NEVER SEEN SUCH A FRIGHTENINGLY MENACING FLEET...!

I-IMPRESSIVE AS ALWAYS, CAO CAO...

WITH THE WIND BLOWING TOWARDS US, WE CAN'T EVEN USE FIRE... JUST HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO FEND AGAINST THIS ATTACK NOW...?

周

吳

HAHAHA...
ALLOW ME TO CRUSH ALL 50,000 OF YOUR SOLDIERS ONCE AND FOR ALL, ZHOU YU!

ピュウウ

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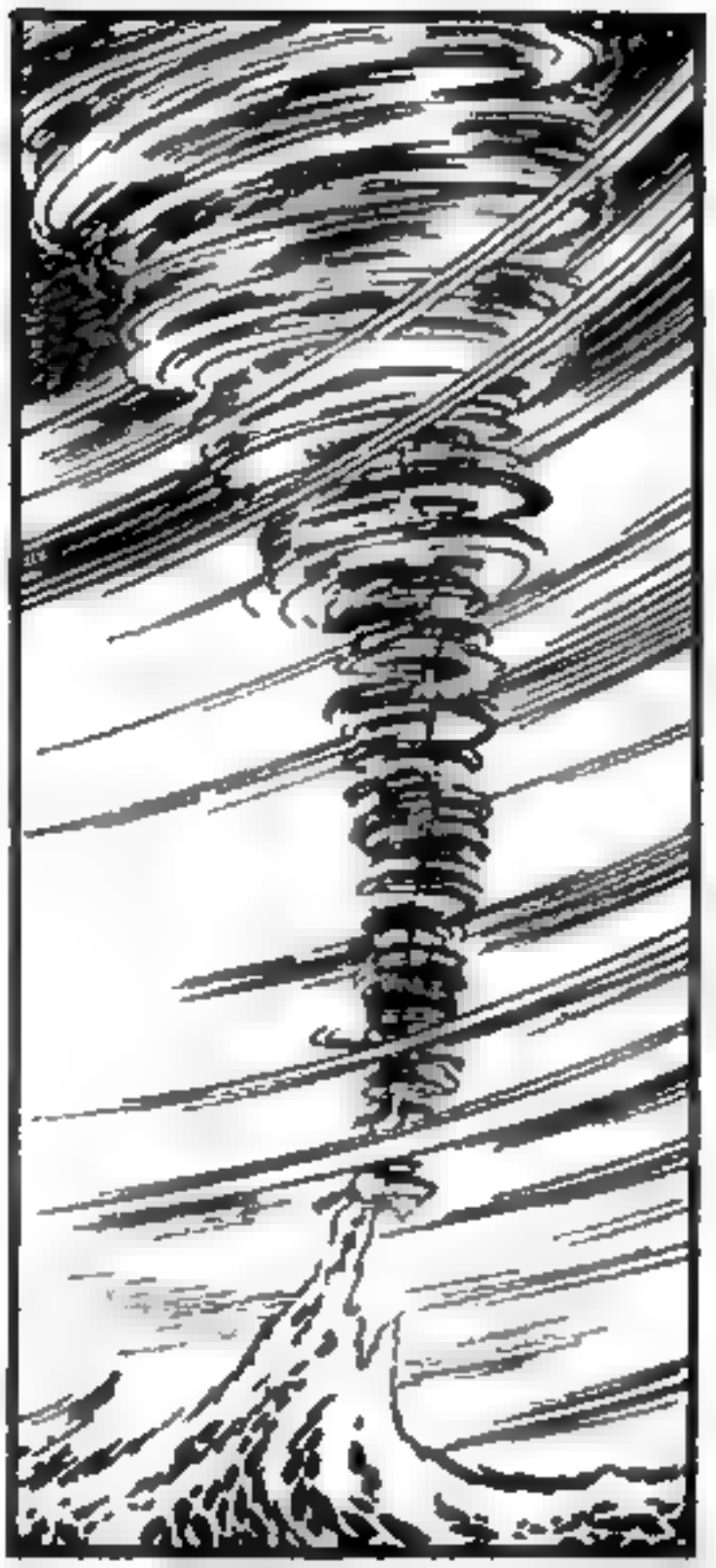
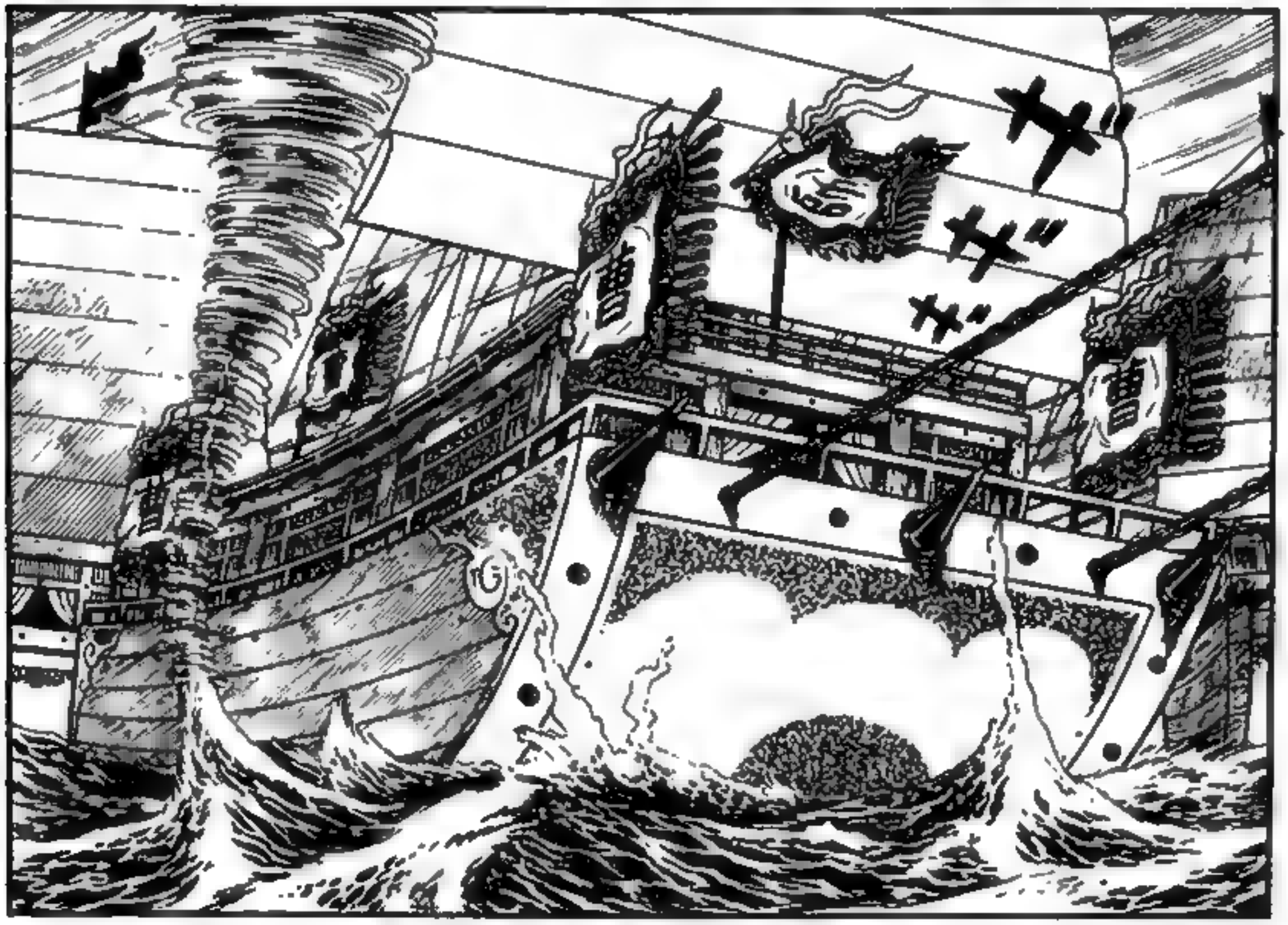
曹
HMM...
THE WINDS ARE BECOMING DANGEROUSLY STRONG, CHANCELLOR. PERHAPS IT WOULD BE BEST TO GO BACK INSIDE THE CABIN.

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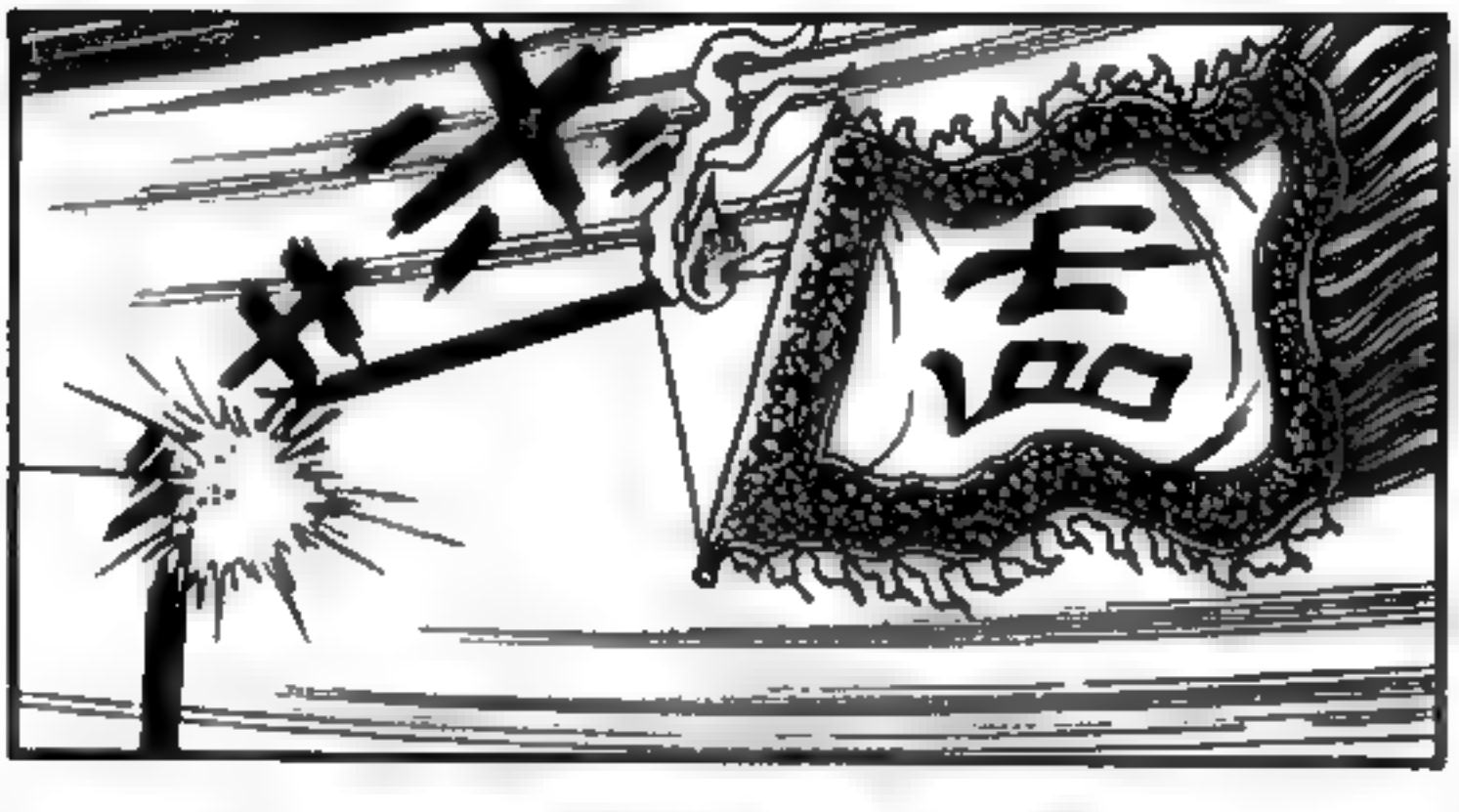
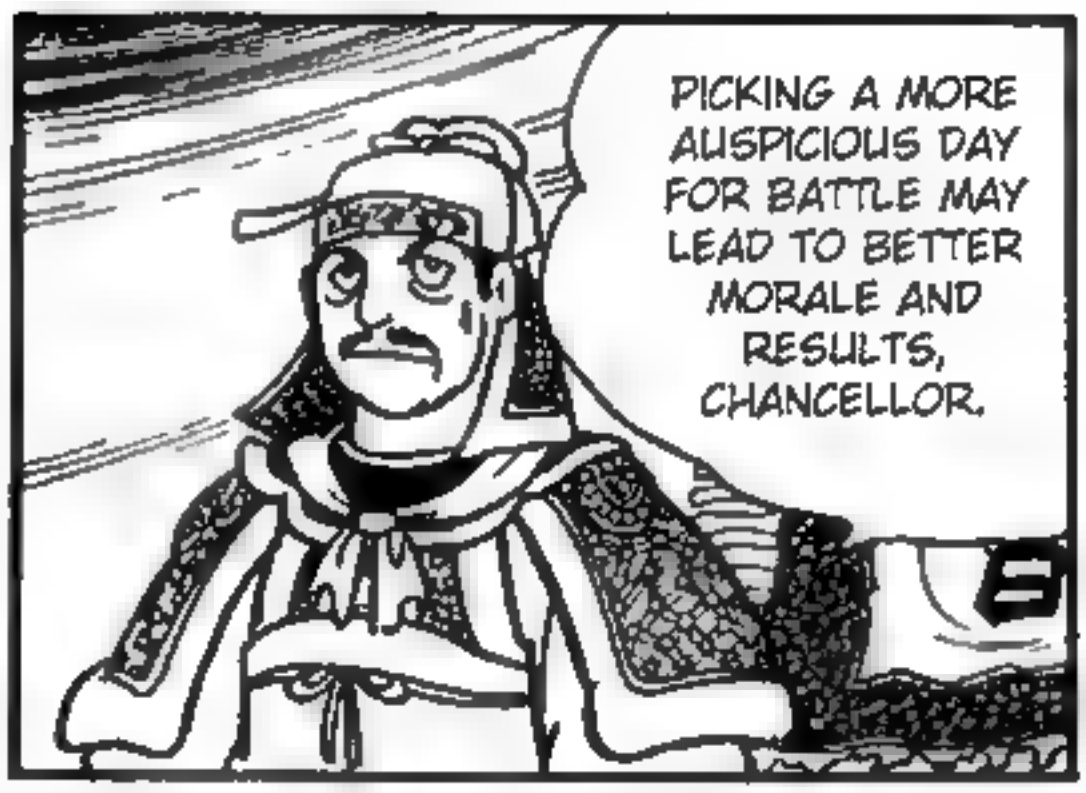
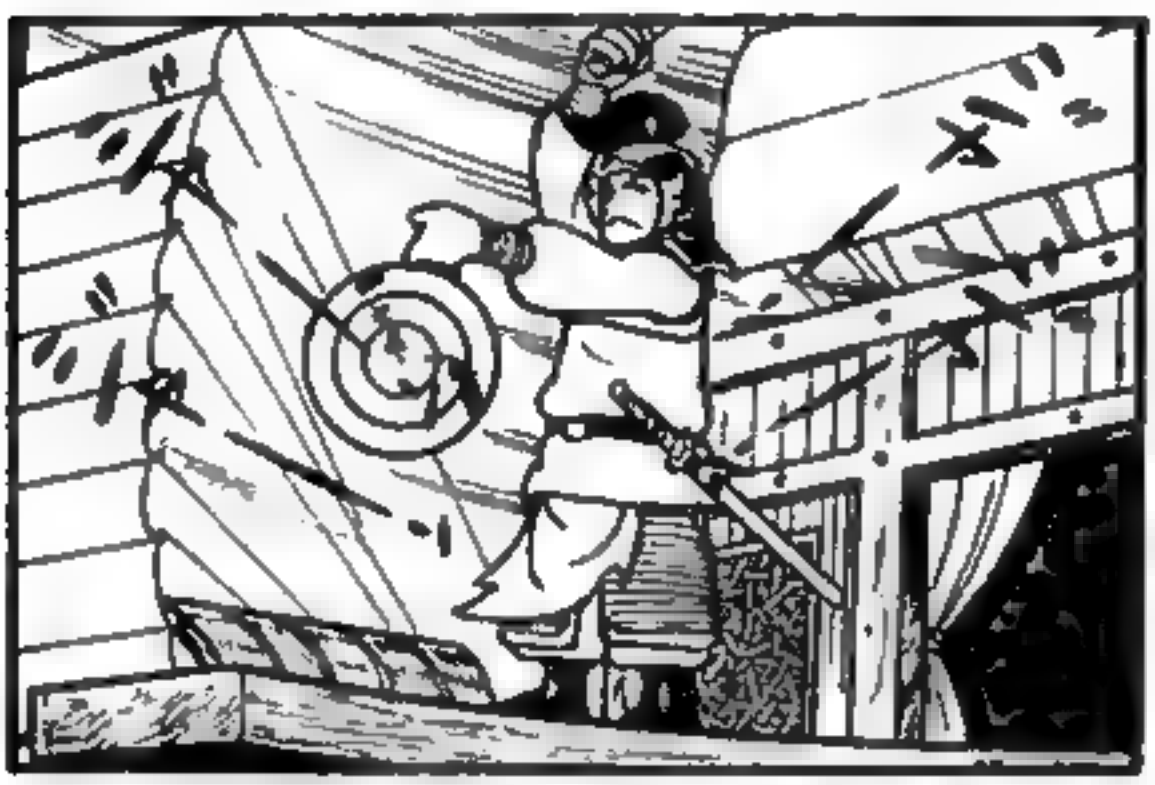
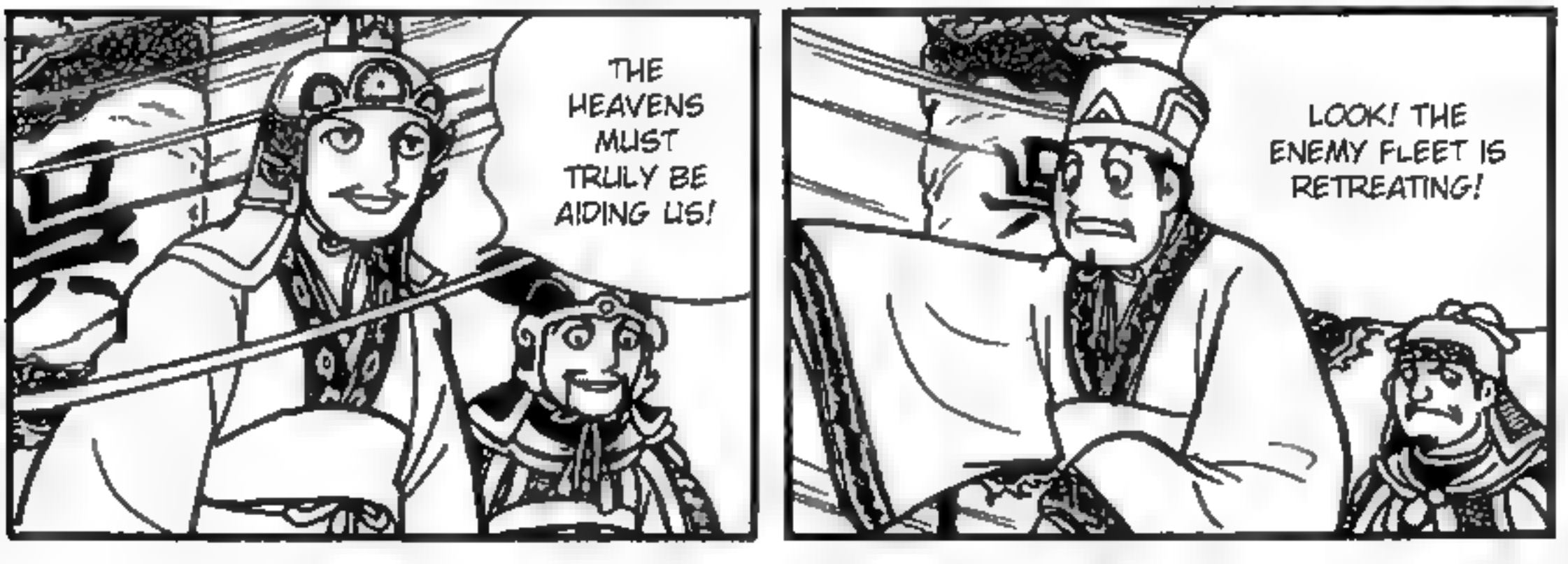

AHH!
AH!
I AM OF THE SAME OPINION. IT IS TRADITIONALLY SAID THAT A FLAG'S STAFF BREAKING BEFORE THE BATTLE PORTENDS DEFEAT. PERHAPS WE OUGHT TO BE CAUTIOUS AND RETREAT FOR TODAY...?
THIS MAY BE A WARNING FROM THE HEAVENS, CHANCELLOR.
THE COMMANDER'S FLAG BREAKING AT THE ONSET OF BATTLE!?

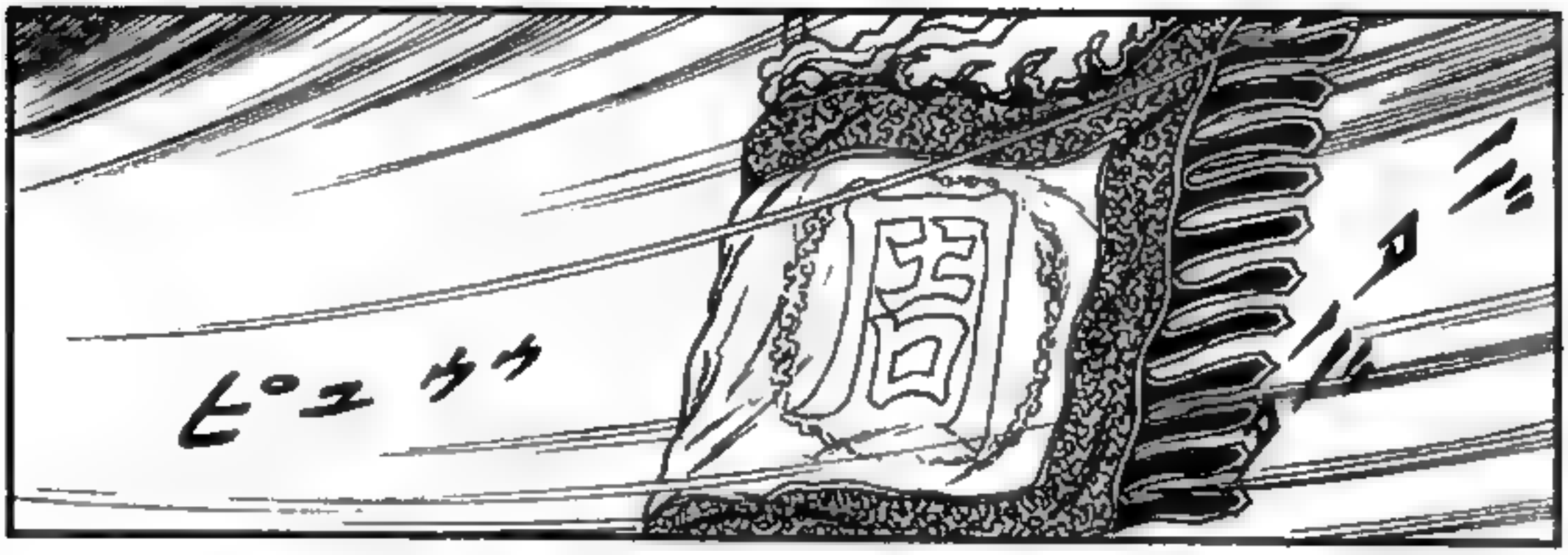
HMM...


PICKING A MORE AUSPICIOUS DAY FOR BATTLE MAY LEAD TO BETTER MORALE AND RESULTS, CHANCELLOR.



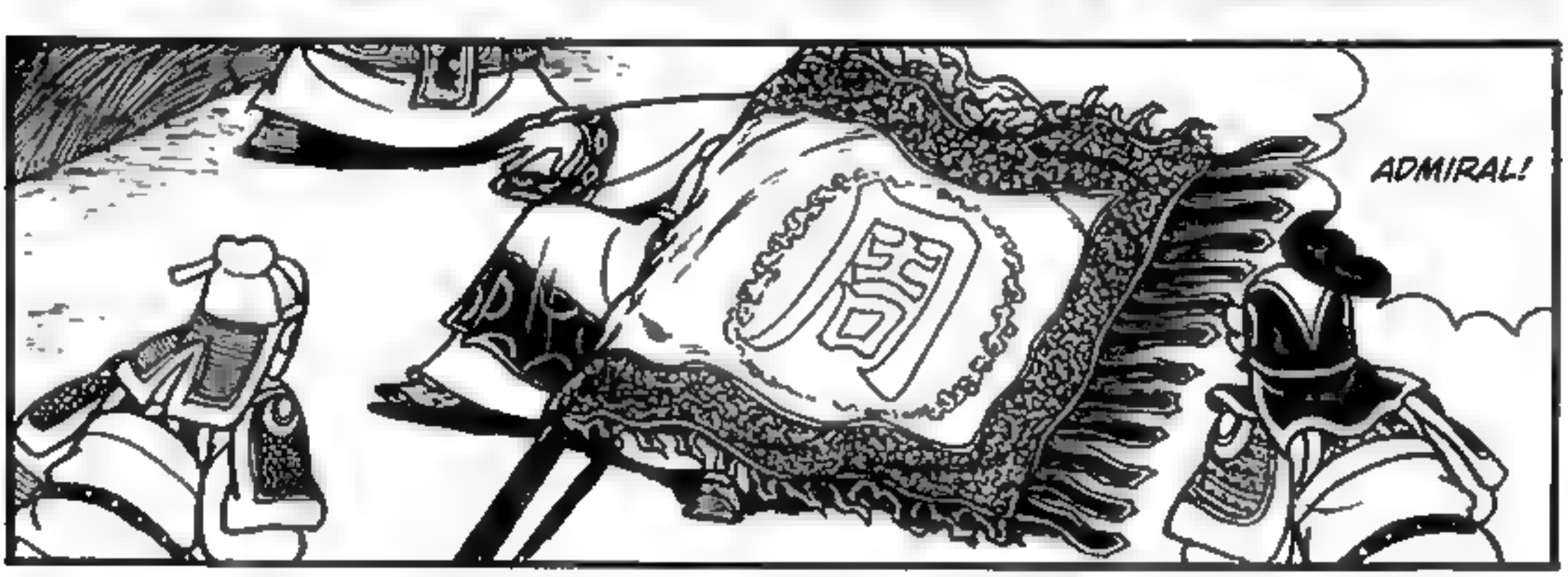
FINE, GIVE THE SIGNAL TO RETREAT FOR TODAY!


THE HEAVENS MUST TRULY BE AIDING US!
LOOK! THE ENEMY FLEET IS RETREATING!



AHH!

AGHH!


ADMIRAL!

ADMIRAL ZHOU!

CALL THE DOCTOR AT ONCE! WERE SOMETHING BAD TO BEFALL THE ADMIRAL, THE ENTIRE FATE OF WU SHALL LIE IN JEOPARDY!

周

吳

AH, KONGMING!

HOW IS THE ADMIRAL'S CONDITION?

I'M AFRAID HE HAS STILL YET TO GET UP FROM HIS BED...

AH, IS THAT SO?

THAT'S JUST THE THING. THE DOCTORS SAY HE HAS NO EXTERNAL INJURIES...

WHERE WAS THE ADMIRAL INJURED?

IT'LL ALL BE FINE ONCE THE ADMIRAL RECOVERS.

LU SU, THERE'S NOTHING FOR YOU TO BE GRAVELY CONCERNED ABOUT.

WITH THE ADMIRAL SICK IN BED, THIS IS THE MOST OPPORTUNE MOMENT FOR OUR ENEMIES. I FEAR THAT CAO CAO IS NOT SO FOOLISH AS TO LET THIS CHANCE JUST SLIP BY.

YES, BUT A MAN CAN'T SIMPLY RECOVER EVEN IF YOU TELL HIM TO...

YES, OF COURSE. RIGHT THIS WAY.

WOULD YOU ALLOW ME TO SEE HIM?

AH, GOOD DAY, KONGMING.

HOW ARE YOU FEELING TODAY, ADMIRAL ZHOU?

JUST WHAT IS SIR FEELING SO INSECURE ABOUT?

I'M AFRAID I'M A LITTLE UNDER THE WEATHER. I FEEL NAUTIOUS EVERYTIME THE DOCTOR TRIES TO GIVE ME MEDICINE.

I FEEL NO SENSE OF INSECURITY AT ALL.

INSECURE?

I TRY BUT AS SOON AS I DO SO, THE NAUSEA HITS ME...

THEN IT SHOULD BE EASY TO GET UP AT ONCE.

AS LONG AS THE DISTRESS CAUSING YOUR MIND TO WORRY CAN BE REMEDIED, YOU SHALL RECOVER IN NO TIME.

THAT IS WHAT'S CALLED THE SICKNESS OF THE MIND.

REALLY? YOU KNOW OF SUCH A MEDICINE?

IT JUST SO HAPPENS I KNOW THE REMEDY SIR NEEDS.

AT ONCE!

WOULD YOU PLEASE CLEAR THE ATTEND-ANTS?
YES, BUT ITS EFFECTIVENESS WILL DECLINE IF OTHERS WERE TO WITNESS IT.

EXCUSE YOURSELVES FROM THE PREMISES.

YES, THANK YOU.
WILL THAT DO?

?

THIS IS THE CAUSE OF SIR'S ILLNESS.

WELL? WAS THAT THE SOURCE OF SIR'S CONCERNS?

TO DEFEAT CAO CAO, I MUST USE FIRE. ALL IS READY, BUT THE SOUTHEAST WINDS.

IT SEEMS I CAN'T CONCEAL ANYTHING FROM YOU, KONGMING.

TO BE PERFECTLY HONEST, I HAD A SHIVER OF FRIGHT GO DOWN MY SPINE WHEN I WITNESSED CAO CAO'S WEI NAVY ABOUT TO ATTACK. EVEN IF I WERE TO USE FIRE, THE WINDS WOULD ONLY BURN MY BASE AND SOLDIERS.

THIS REALIZATION OF MY USELESS-NESS HAS LEFT ME IN DESPAIR.

BUT THERE'S NO WAY THE WINDS WOULD BLOW SOUTHEAST IN THIS SEASON. AND SO, I REALIZE THE ONLY THING I CAN ACTUALLY DO IS BIDE MY TIME AND PRAY FOR THE BEST.

WHAT!?

IT JUST SO HAPPENS THAT I'VE COME ACROSS A CERTAIN EXTRAORDINARY MAN WHO GIFTED ME A DIVINATION BOOK CALLED *QI MEN DUN JIA*. IN IT, THERE IS A PASSAGE ON HOW TO SUMMON THE RAINS AND WINDS.

C-CAN YOU ACCOMPLISH SUCH A THING!?

IF SOUTHEAST WINDS ARE WHAT SIR DESIRES, THEN I SHALL ATTEMPT TO SUMMON IT ACCORDING TO WHAT WAS OUTLINED IN THAT BOOK.

THEN I REQUEST AN ALTAR TO BE CONSTRUCTED AT ONCE.

WELL, EVEN IF YOU COULDN'T, I SUPPOSE IT'S BETTER THAN DOING NOTHING.

LU SU, I'LL LEAVE YOU IN CHARGE OF THE ALTAR'S CONSTRUC-TION.

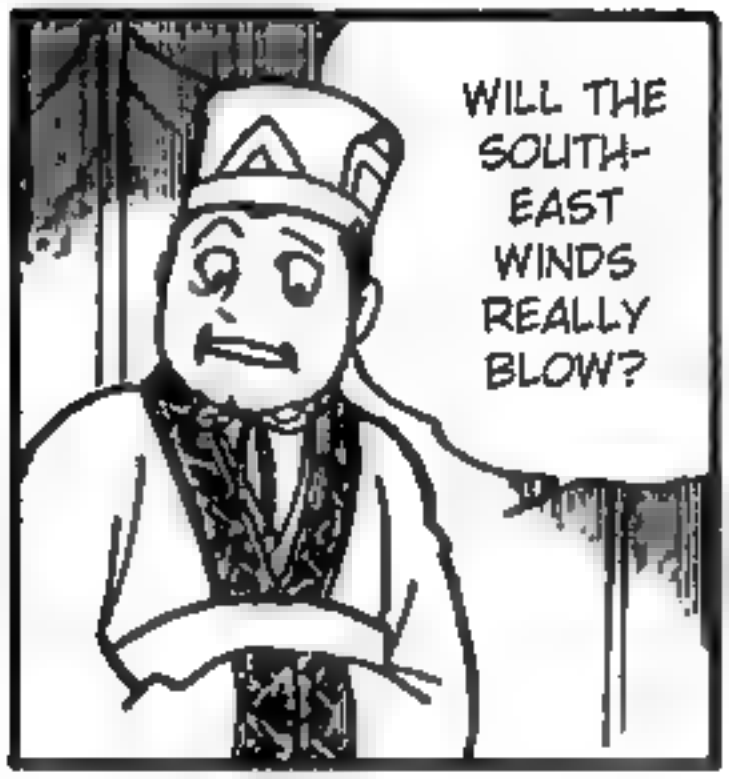
UNDER-STOOD.

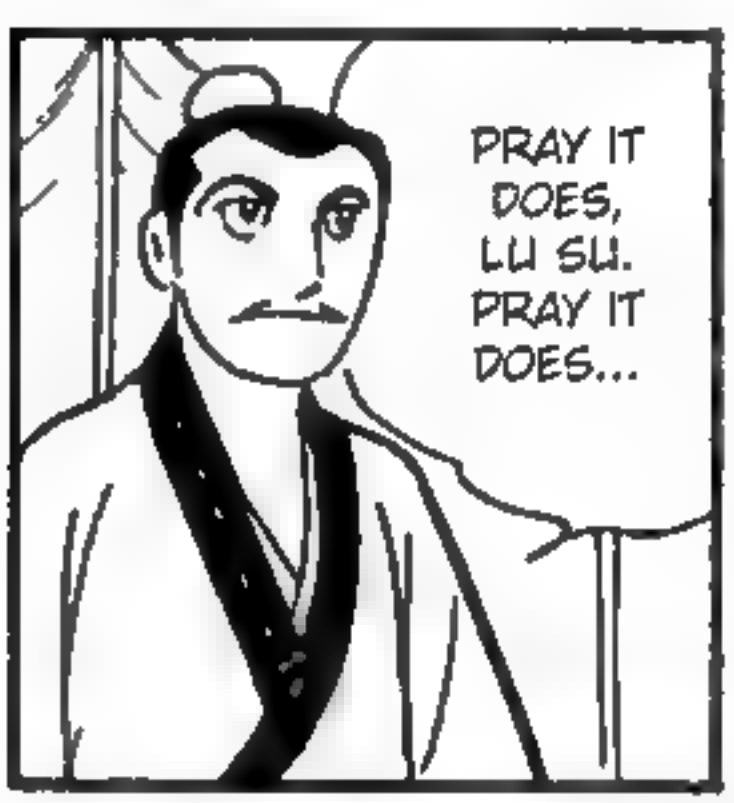
THE 20TH DAY OF THIS MONTH IS THE FIRST DAY OF THE SEXAGENARY CYCLE. PRAYING ON THAT DAY SHOULD SUMMON THE SOUTHEAST WINDS FOR 3 DAYS AND 3 NIGHTS. AS FOR THE ALTAR ITSELF, PLEASE BUILD IT ON NANPING HILLS.

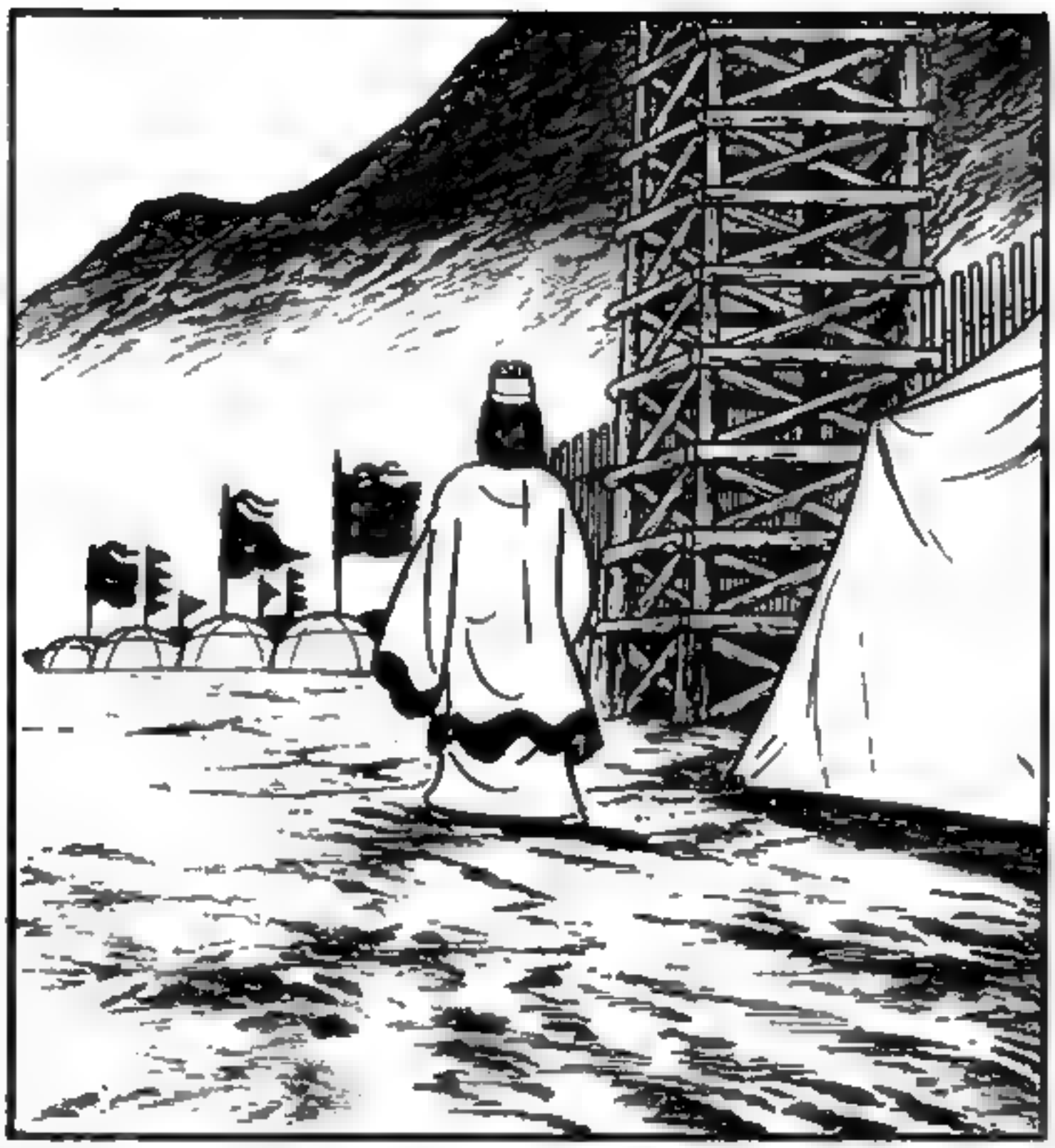
YES, SIR.

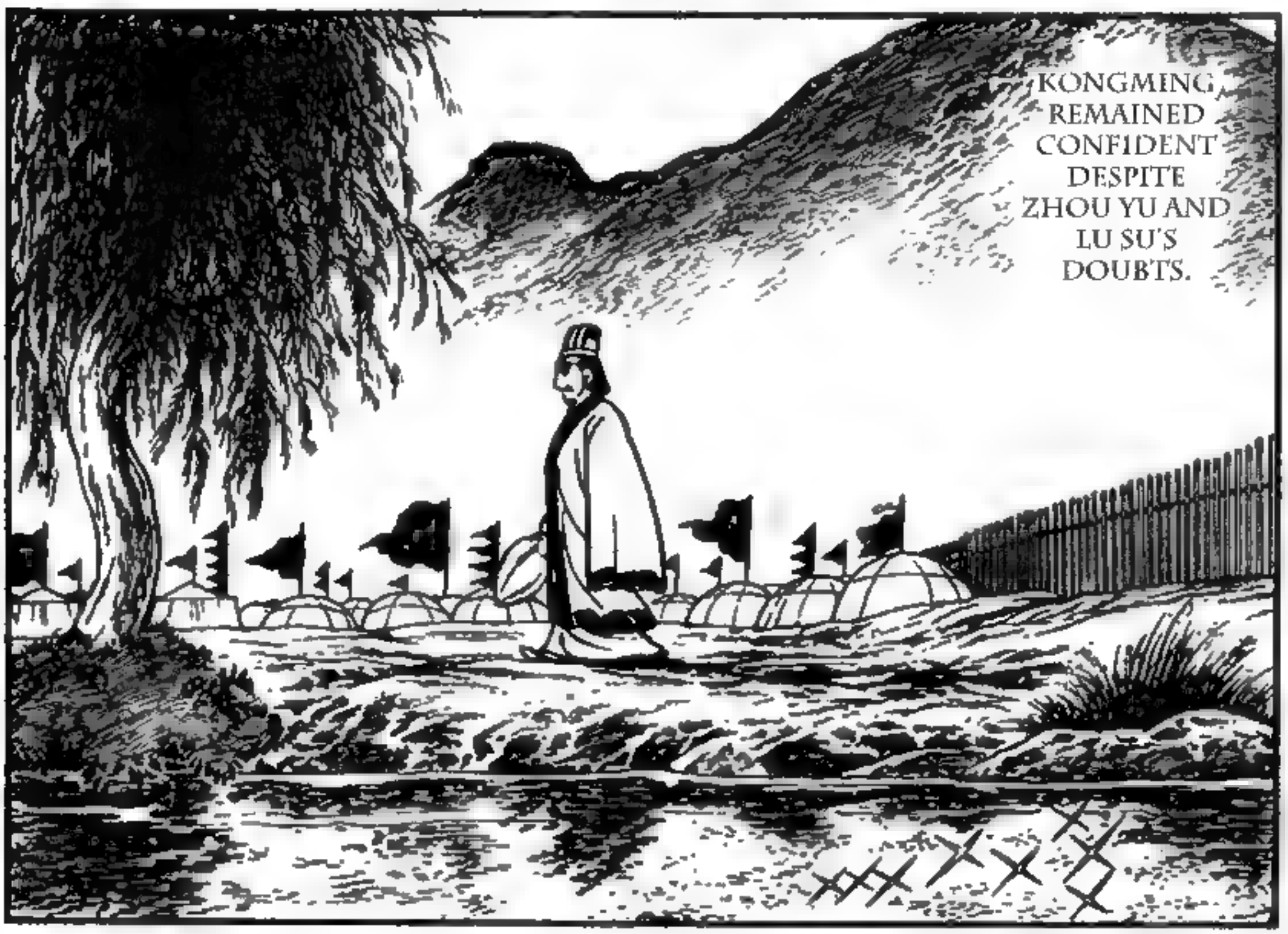
YES, OF COURSE. I PROMISE I SHALL HAVE THAT ALTAR BUILT BEFORE THEN.

THEN PLEASE EXCUSE ME UNTIL THE 20TH.


WILL THE SOUTH-EAST WINDS REALLY BLOW?


PRAY IT DOES, LU SU. PRAY IT DOES...




KONGMING REMAINED CONFIDENT DESPITE ZHOU YU AND LU SU'S DOUBTS.

KONGMING HAD BEEN A KEEN OBSERVER OF THE WEATHER FROM AN EARLY AGE AND HE KNEW THAT SOUTHEAST WINDS WOULD BLOW FOR 2-3 DAYS AROUND THE END OF THE 11TH MONTH IN THE LUNAR CALENDAR. IN MODERN TIMES, IT IS KNOWN TO BE CAUSED BY THE UNIQUE CLIMATE AND CURRENTS OF SOUTHERN CHINA.

THOUGH KONGMING COULD HARDLY KNOW THE EXACT UNDERLYING CAUSES THAT WERE ONLY UNDERSTOOD MORE THAN 1700 YEARS LATER, WHAT HE DID KNOW WAS THAT THE SOUTHEAST WINDS WOULD BLOW AND THAT DAY WAS NEAR

SOUTHEAST WINDS

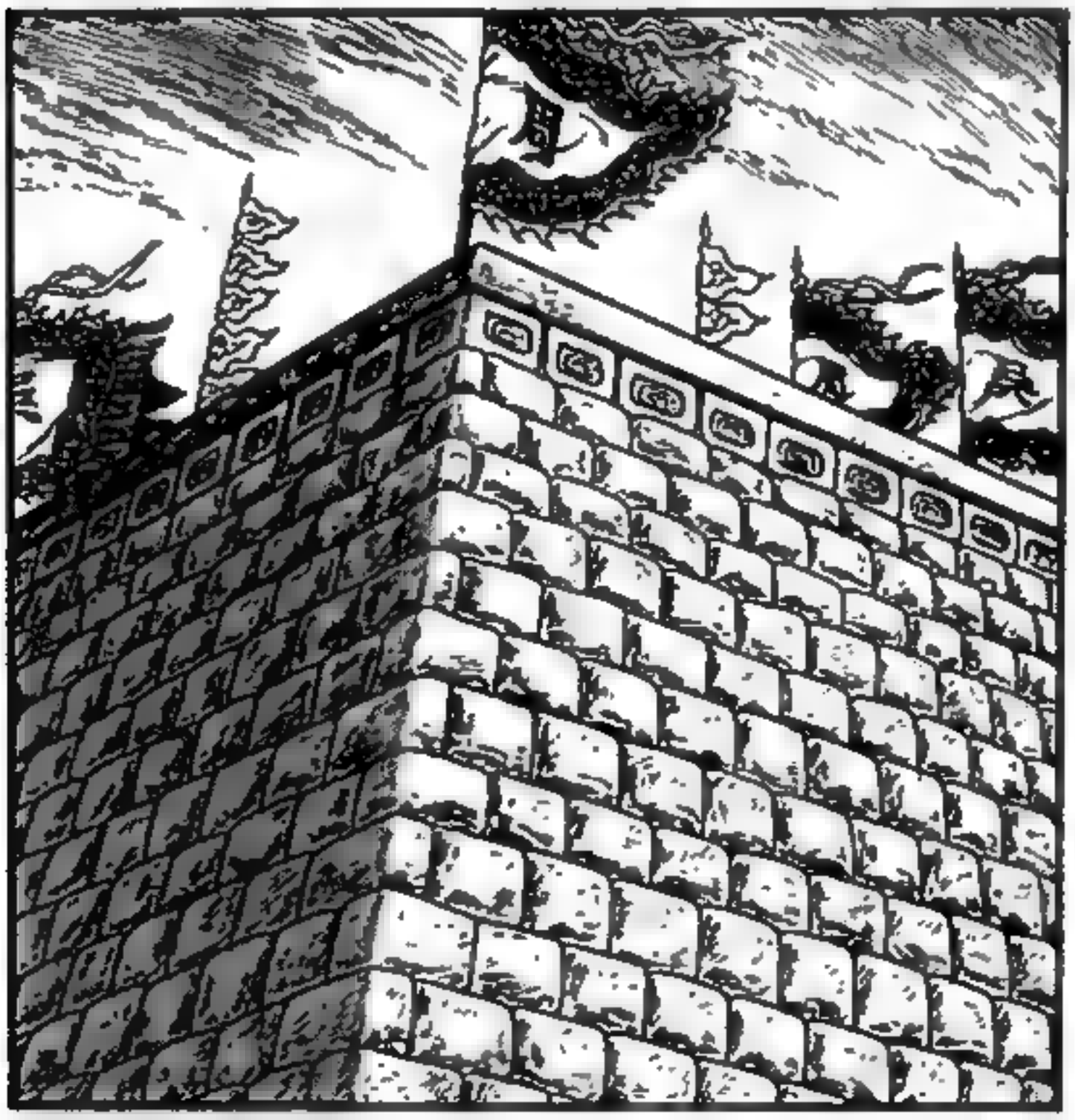
WHILE I'M PRAYING, MAKE THE NECESSARY PREPARATIONS SO YOU CAN ATTACK AT ONCE.

?

THERE IS ONE MORE THING I'D LIKE TO MENTION.

UNDERSTOOD. I SHALL PASS YOUR MESSAGE TO THE ADMIRAL.

WORRYING ABOUT WHETHER THE WIND WILL REALLY COME OR NOT SHALL ONLY JEOPARDIZE YOUR PLANS.



LISTEN WELL. I SHALL HEREBY CONDUCT THE NEEDED RITES TO SUMMON THE WINDS. THEREFORE, YOU ARE TO BE SILENT AT ALL TIMES AND NOT CREATE ANY DISTURBANCES, NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS. ANYONE WHO DISOBEYS THESE RULES SHALL BE TRIED BY MILITARY LAW AND EXECUTED.

甘寧

GOT IT.

GAN NING. GO ENTERTAIN CAI HE AND CAI ZHONG WITH DRINKS SO THEY DON'T REALIZE THAT OUR FORCES ARE PREPARING AN ATTACK.

GOOD DAY, GENERAL GAN NING.

HEY THERE, LADS.

'COURSE, THERE'S NO HARM IN HAVING A COUPLE OF DRINKS WHILE DISCUSSING, IS THERE?

HAHA, WELL SAID.

YES, GOOD IDEA.

I'VE COME TO DISCUSS WHEN EXACTLY I SHOULD MAKE MY WAY OUT OF HERE AND DEFECT TO THE CHANCELLOR.

YES, GOOD QUESTION. IF WE CAN THINK OF SOMETHING GOOD, IT'LL MEAN GUARANTEED PROMOTIONS FOR ALL OF US...

ALSO, WHAT SORT OF DEED CAN WE ACCOMPLISH FOR THE CHANCELLOR BEFORE WE GO BACK?

GOOD,
GOOD.

LOAD THE DRY REEDS AND OIL-SOAKED WOOD ONTO THE BOAT.
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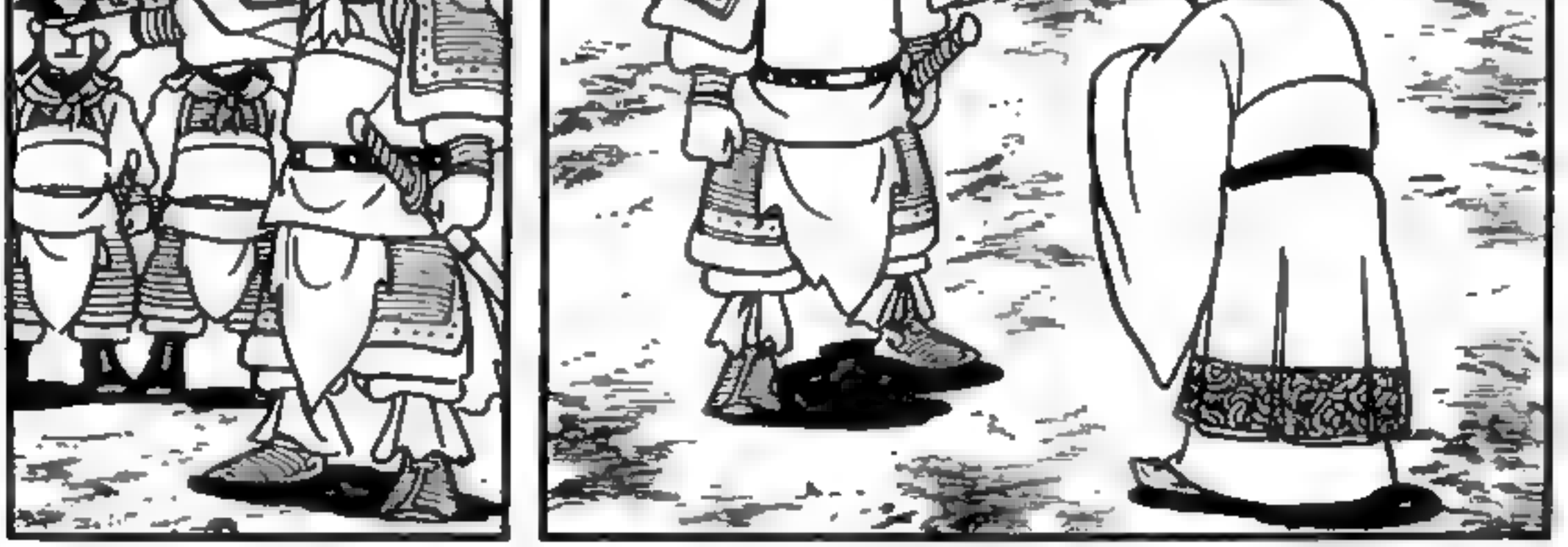
GOOD.
GAN NING IS SUCCESSFULLY DISTRACTING THE SPIES, GENERAL HUANG GAI.



MAKE SURE THE REEDS AND WOOD ARE LAID ON TOP OF THE SULPHUR AND SALTPETER.

YES.

I ASSUME YOU'LL SEND THE BOATS OUT AS SOON AS THE WIND COMES?

SMOOTHLY AS CAN BE, GENERAL.

HOW'RE THE OTHER PREPARA-TIONS COMING ALONG?

NO, NOT YET, ADMIRAL.

WHAT IS IT? HAS THE WIND STARTED TO BLOW?

KONGMING'S PRAYING DOESN'T SEEM TO BE DOING ANYTHING AT ALL... DO YOU THINK THIS MIGHT BE JUST ANOTHER ONE OF HIS TRICKS?

HMM...

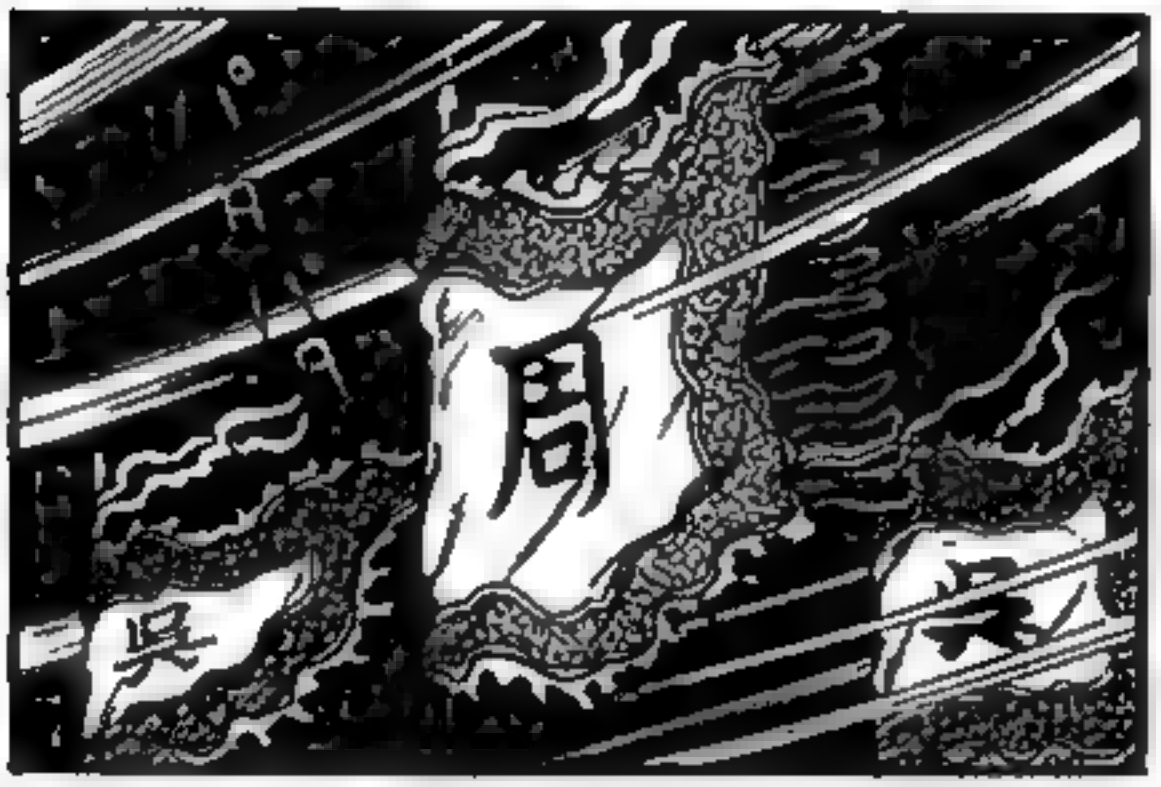
NO, KONGMING IS NOT THE TYPE TO CONFIDENTLY BOAST ABOUT SUCH SERIOUS MATTERS AND WASTE TIME.

BUT WAKE ME UP AT ONCE IF THE WIND STARTS BLOWING.

YES, OF COURSE.

...FINE.

THE NIGHT HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN. I RECOMMEND THE ADMIRAL TO GET SOME REST WHILE POSSIBLE.



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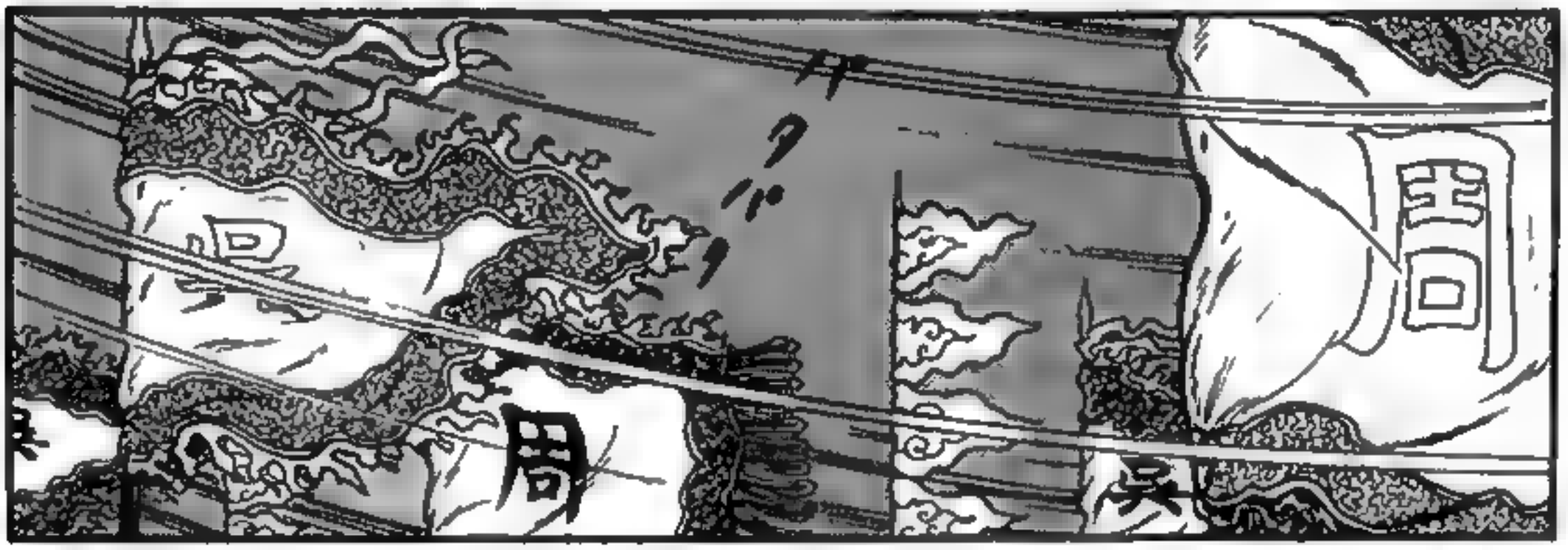
HUH?

HM?



AND IT'S BLOWING SOUTHEAST!

LOOK! THE WIND IS HERE!

...HMM?

ADMIRAL! THE WIND!

WHAT'S GOING ON?

AND IT'S BLOWING SOUTHEAST TOWARDS THE ENEMIES!
MAN OR DIVINE SPIRIT, WHICH ARE YOU, KONGMING...?

YES?

DING FENG! XU SHENG!

FOLLOW ME, MEN!

YES, SIR.

WHISPER WHISPER

MIGHT I ASK WHAT ORDER SIR GAVE TO THOSE TWO GENERALS...?

?

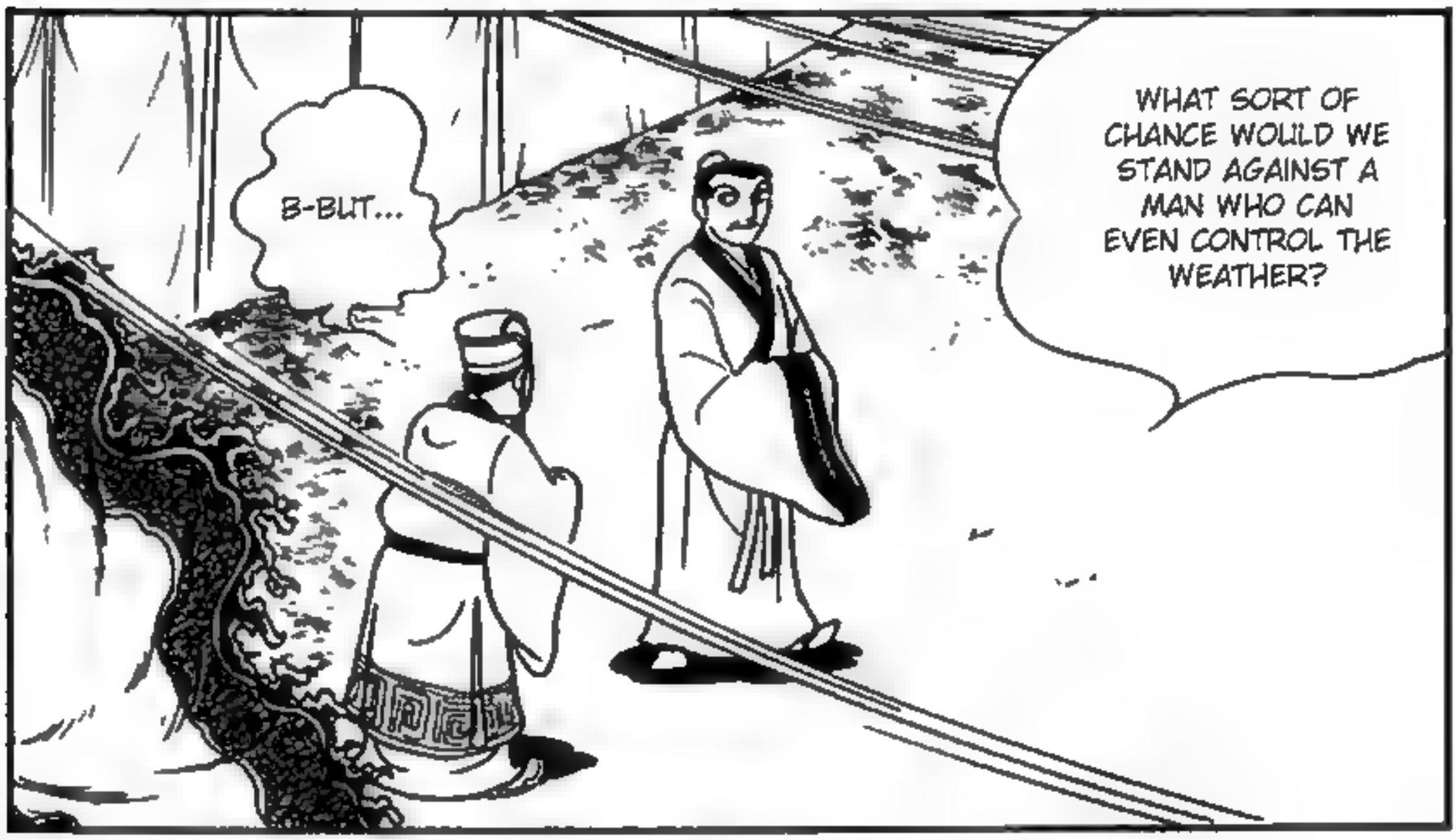
IT... IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN AN ORDER TO... ASSASSINATE KONGMING NOW, COULD IT...?

THEY APPEAR TO BE HEADING TOWARDS NANPING HILLS...

T-THAT MAY BE TRUE BUT THE ADMIRAL SHOULD NOT FORGET CAO CAO IS OUR CURRENT GREATEST THREAT.

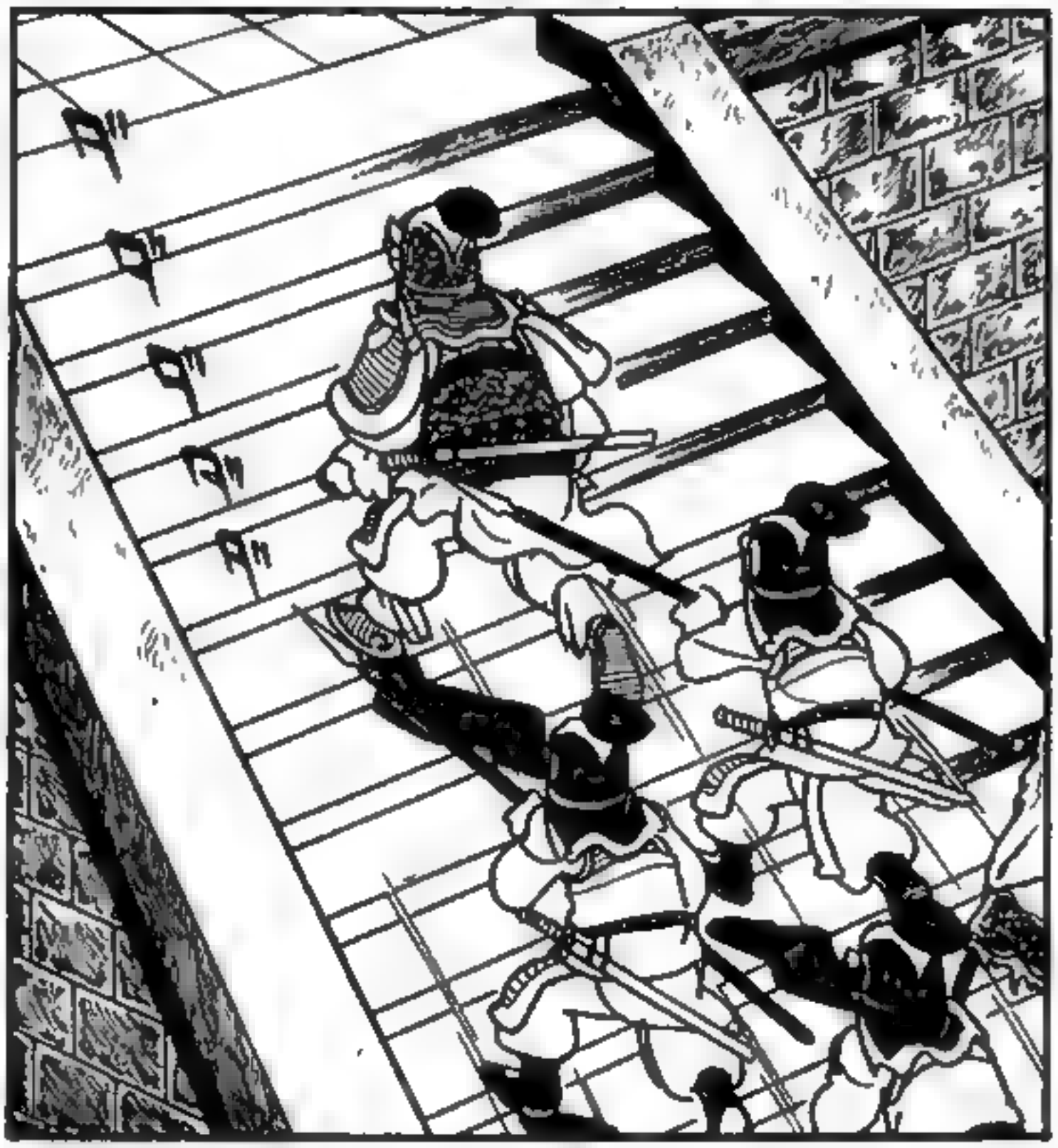
NOW IS THE BEST TIME TO KILL A MAN WHO WILL CLEARLY BECOME THE GREATEST THREAT TO WU.

LOOK AT THESE WINDS, LU SU.


B-BUT...
WHAT SORT OF CHANCE WOULD WE STAND AGAINST A MAN WHO CAN EVEN CONTROL THE WEATHER?

THAT MAN IS TOO DANGEROUS! I CANNOT LET HIM RETURN TO LIU BEI ALIVE!

HM?



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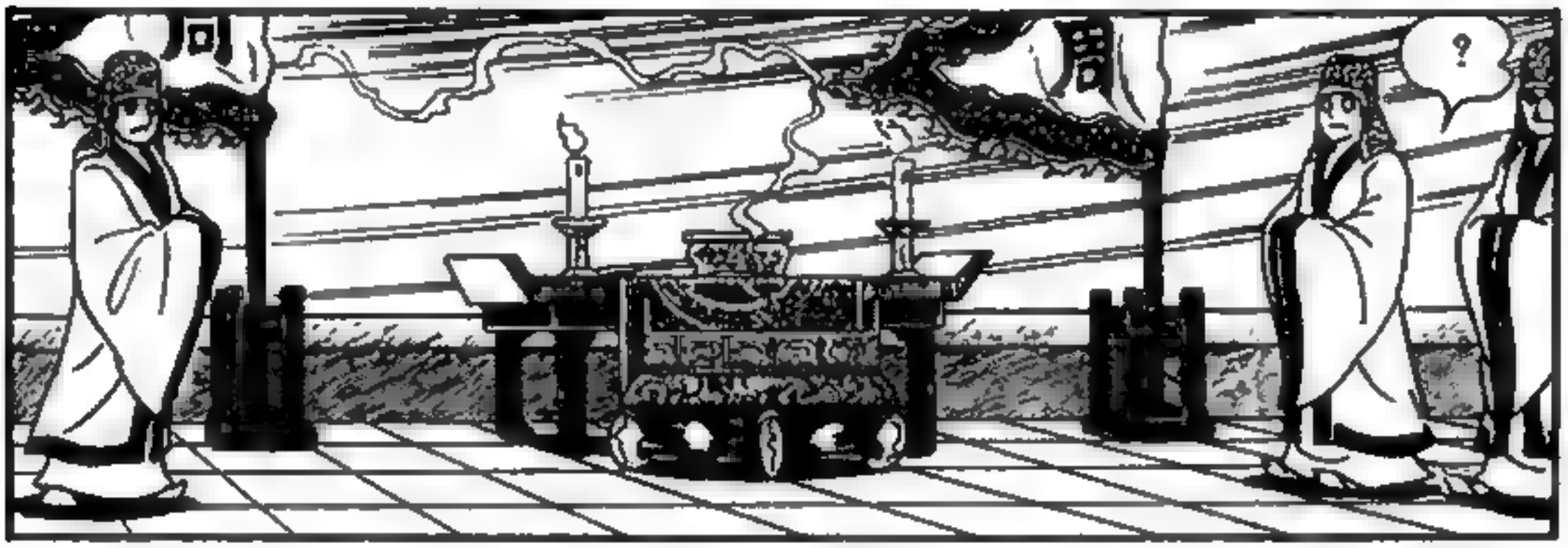
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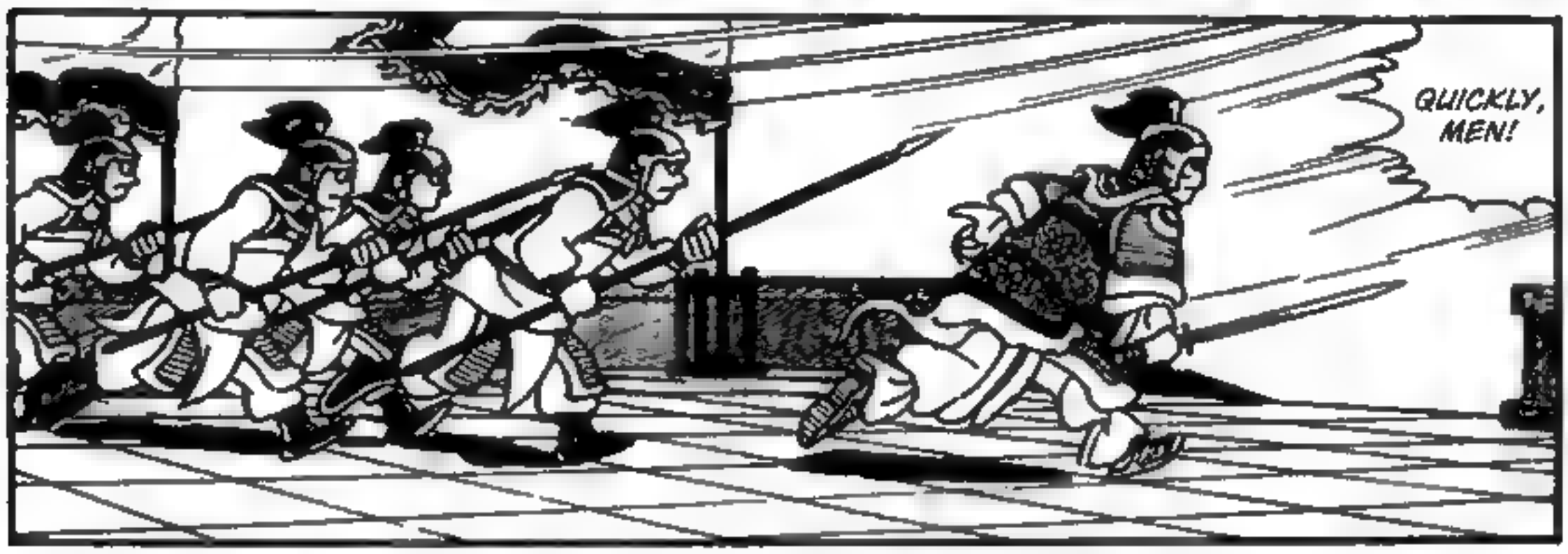
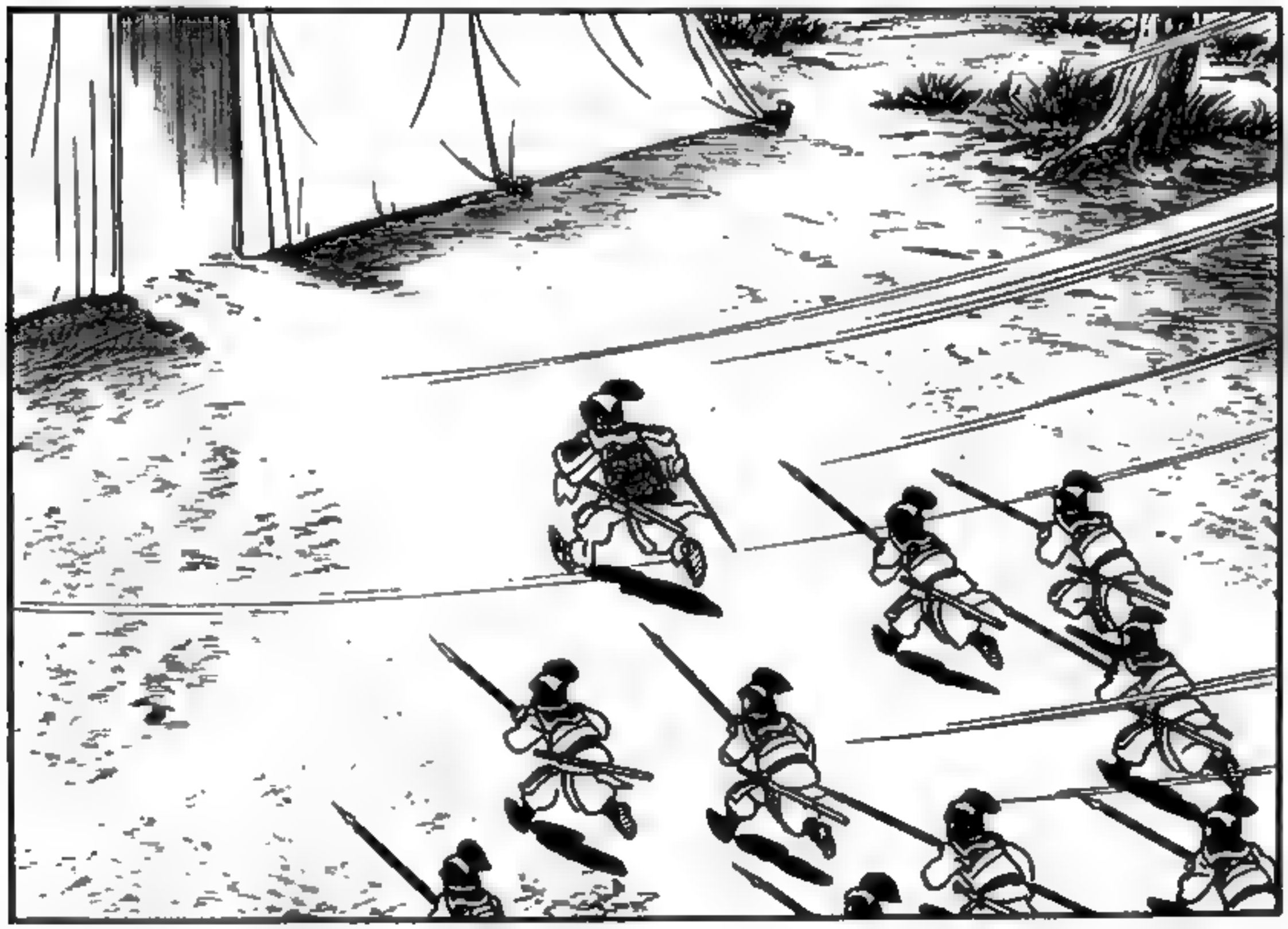
HE RETIRED TO HIS TENT WHEN THE WIND STARTED BLOWING.

WHERE IS KONGMING!?


QUICKLY, MEN!



AH-

!!

FIND KONG-MING!

COULD HE HAVE RUN AWAY?

HE'S NOT HERE.

IF YOU SPOT KONGMING, EXECUTE HIM AT ONCE!

I REPEAT, HAS ANYONE AROUND HERE SEEN KONGMING!?

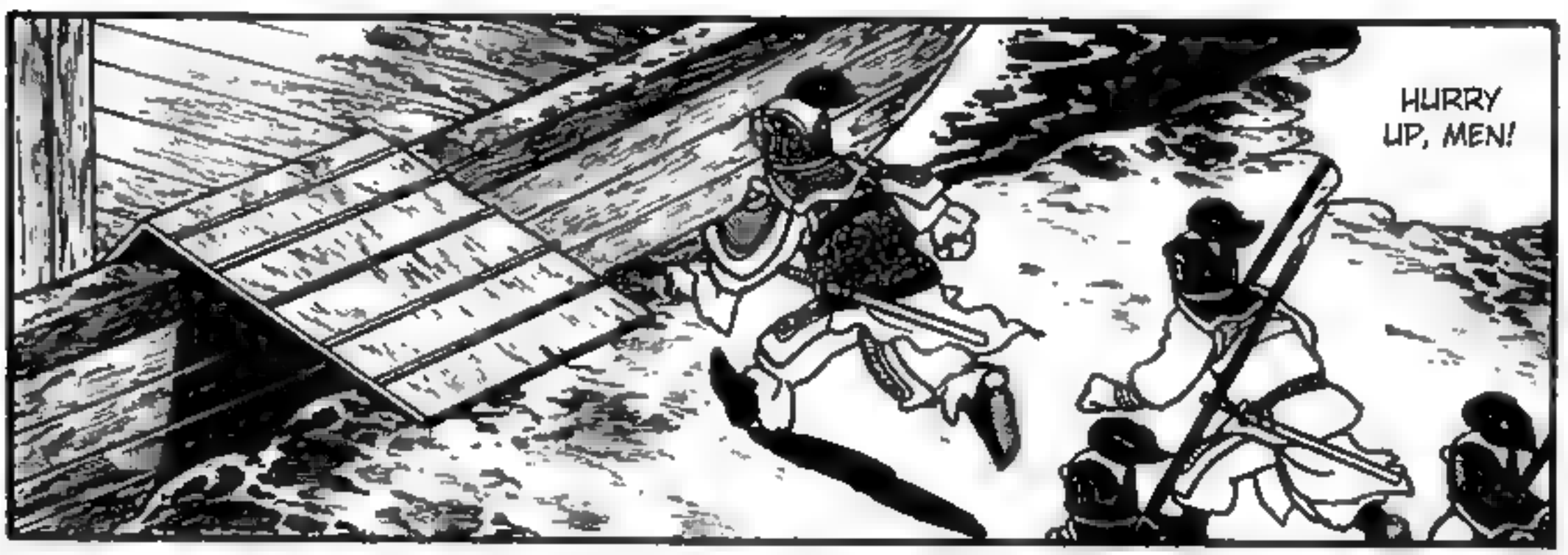
HAS ANYONE AROUND HERE SEEN KONGMING!?

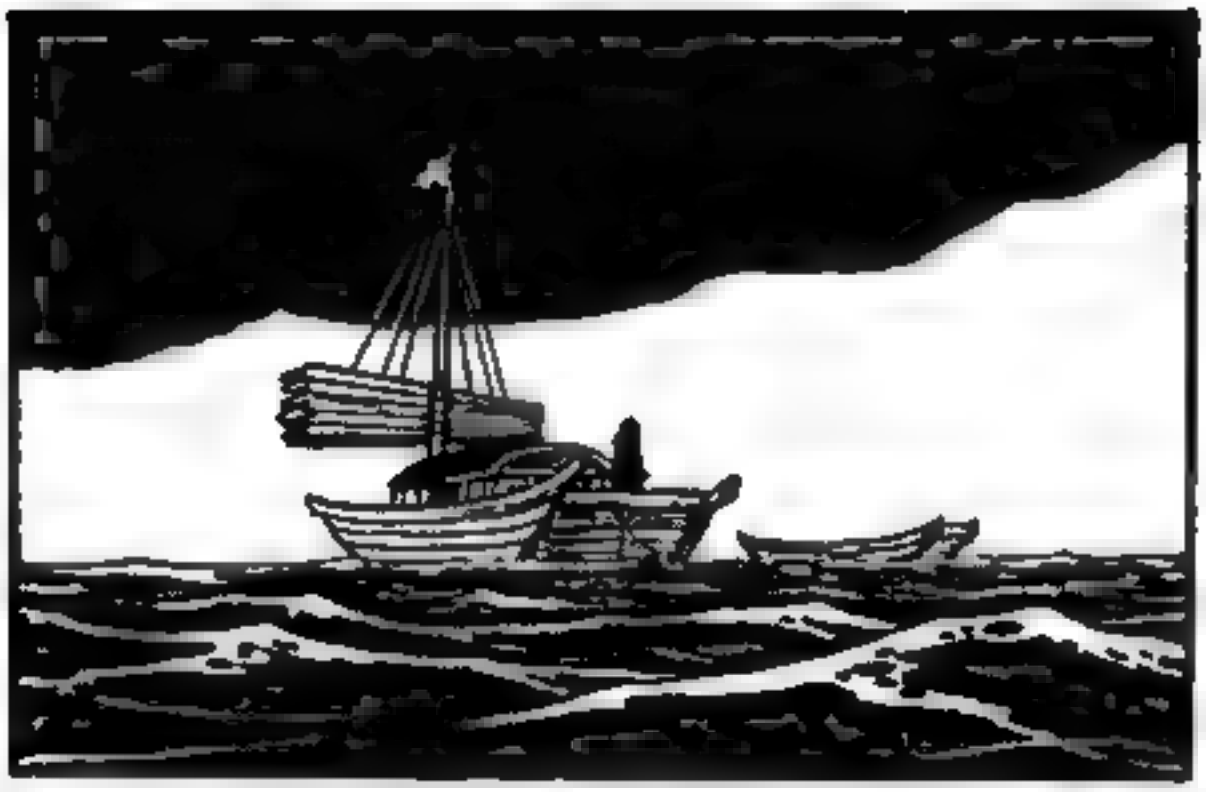
WHAT!? WHEN!?

SIR! I SAW KONGMING GET ON A BOAT A LITTLE UPSTREAM FROM HERE.

THEN IT'S STILL POSSIBLE TO CATCH UP TO HIM.

I BELIEVE IT WAS ONLY A LITTLE WHILE AGO.


HURRY UP, MEN!

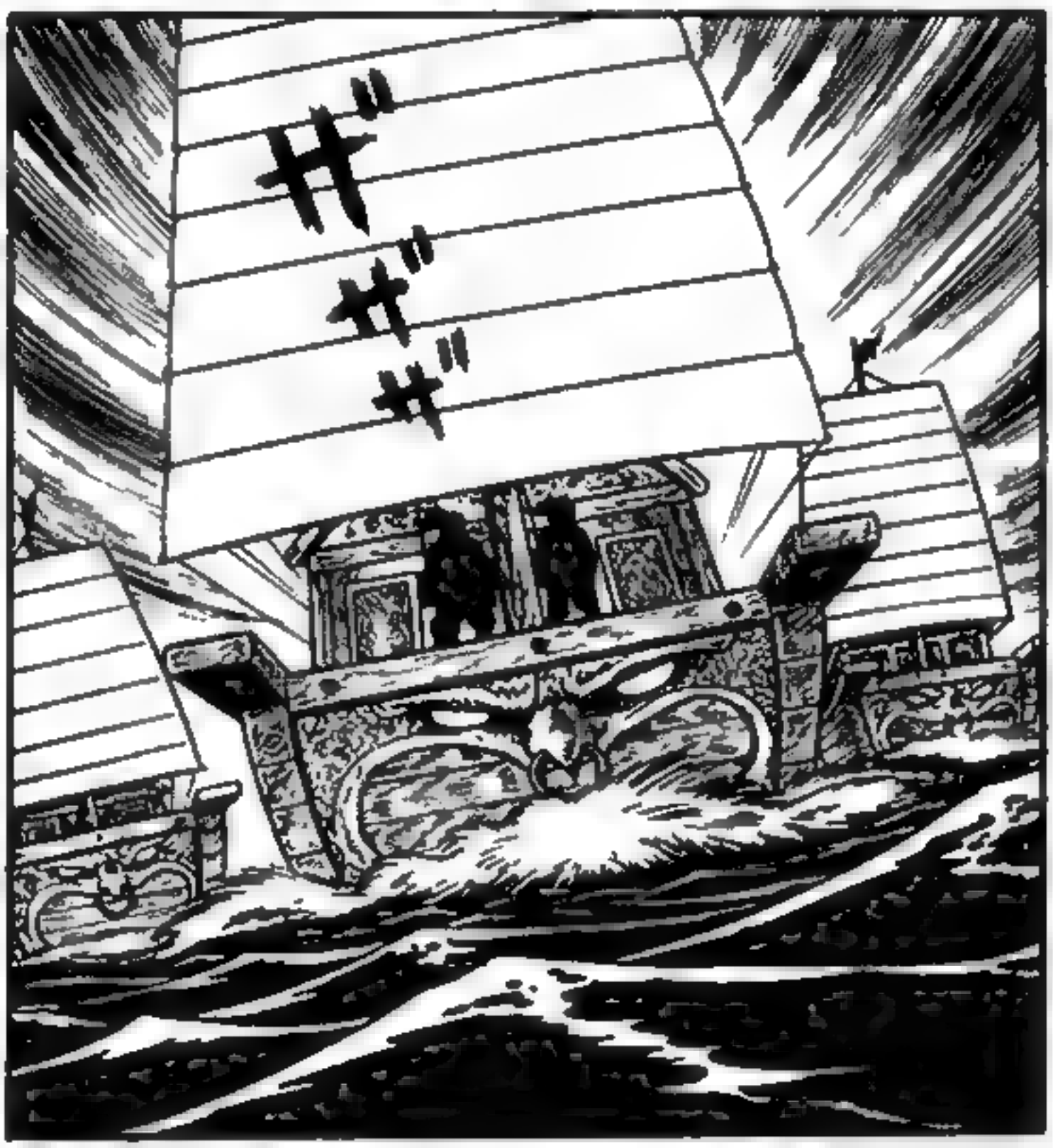


HM?

LOWER THE SAILS!

GOOD.
SIR, UP AHEAD!

THE BOAT OVER THERE! I ORDER YOU TO STOP!



I BRING AN URGENT MESSAGE FROM ADMIRAL ZHOU. PLEASE STOP YOUR BOAT FOR A MOMENT, KONGMING.

WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE MATTER?

IN THE MEANWHILE, I SHALL HEAD BACK TO XIAKOU. PASS MY FAREWELL ALONG TO THE ADMIRAL.

MORE IMPORTANTLY, YOU SHOULD TELL THE ADMIRAL TO HURRY UP WITH HIS ATTACK WHILE THE SOUTHEAST WINDS ARE BLOWING.

HAHAHA! I APPRECIATE YOUR EFFORTS IN DELIVERING THE ADMIRAL'S MESSAGE BUT I ALREADY KNOW WHAT HE WANTS TO SAY.

START ROWING, MEN! WE HAVE TO CATCH UP NO MATTER WHAT!

N-NO, YOU CAN'T! THE ADMIRAL URGENTLY REQUIRES YOUR PRESENCE!

?

PERSISTENT LITTLE BUGGERS, AREN'T YOU?

? ?

I HAVE BEEN EXPRESSLY ORDERED BY MY LORD TO SAFELY ESCORT OUR COMMANDER BACK TO XIAKOU.

IF YOU HAVE EYES, THEN LOOK UPON ME! IF YOU HAVE EARS, THEN HEAR MY WORDS! THE MAN WHO STANDS BEFORE YOU IS ZHAO YUN ZILONG!

M-MY APOLOGIES, GENERAL. WE SIMPLY WANTED TO PASS A MESSAGE TO KONGMING...

WHAT RIGHT DO YOU HAVE TO CONTINUE IMPEDING WITH MY MISSION!?

SILENCE! DO YOU TAKE ME FOR A FOOL!? JUST WHAT SORT OF MESSAGE WOULD REQUIRE BRINGING ALONG SO MANY SOLDIERS!?

BUT COME A SINGLE INCH CLOSER AND MY PATIENCE WILL RUN OUT!

SLAUGHTERING YOU ALL WOULD ONLY BE TOO EASY BUT WE ARE ALLIES THAT MUST WORK TOGETHER TO STAND ANY CHANCE OF DEFEATING CAO CAO. THAT IS WHY I HAVE REFRAINED FROM SHOOTING YOU THUS FAR.

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AHH!

ACK!

RAISE THE SAILS!

UNDERSTAND? DO NOT FORCE ME TO TAKE ANY UNNECESSARY LIVES TODAY.

D-DON'T LET THEM ESCAPE!

GIVE IT UP, XU SHENG.

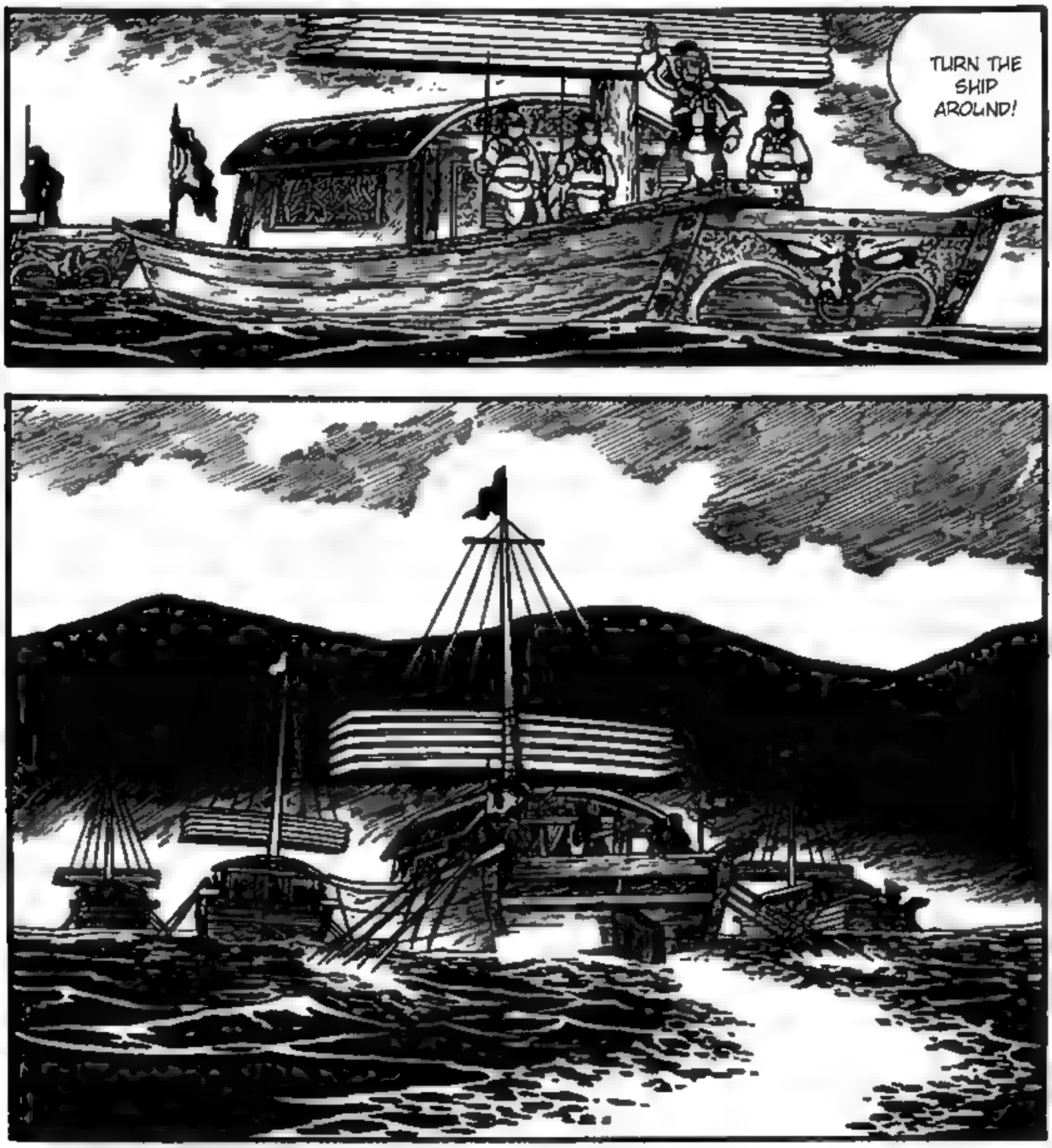
YOU WOULDN'T REALLY WANT TO DIE HERE AND MISS OUT ON WHAT WILL BE THE GREATEST BATTLE OF OUR TIMES NOW, WOULD YOU?

NOT ONLY THAT, HE'S ESCORTED BY ZHAO ZILONG. THE SAME ZHAO ZILONG WHO, WHILE CARRYING HIS LORD'S CHILD, SINGLE-HANDEDLY FENDED OFF CAO CAO'S ENTIRE ARMY AT CHANGBAN. TESTING HIS PATIENCE ANY FURTHER WILL ONLY COST US OUR LIVES.

THAT KONGMING HAD EVEN PLANNED EXACTLY WHAT DAY TO RETURN TO XIAKOU. HE'S NOT A MAN THE LIKES OF US CAN HOPE TO OUTSMART.

ALRIGHT, YOU'VE CONVINCED ME.

NOW LET'S TURN BACK.


TURN THE SHIP AROUND!

ALL THAT'S LEFT IS TO TRUST IN ZHOU YU'S TALENTS.

IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE GIVEN UP.

NGHH... HE PULLED ANOTHER ONE OVER MY EYES...!

WHAT!? KONGMING HAD ALREADY PREPARED AN ESCAPE BY BOAT!?

WHY DIDN'T I KILL HIM SOONER!?

THIS IS EXACTLY WHY I TRIED TO KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON HIM! DESPITE ALL HIS HELP, I KNEW HIS REAL INTENTION WAS TO HAVE WU AND WEI FIGHT AND WEAKEN EACH OTHER.

吳

WHAT!?

THAT'S RIGHT. WHY DON'T WE TEMPORARILY MAKE PEACE WITH CAO CAO AND ATTACK LIU BEI FIRST?

Y-YES, YOU'RE RIGHT.

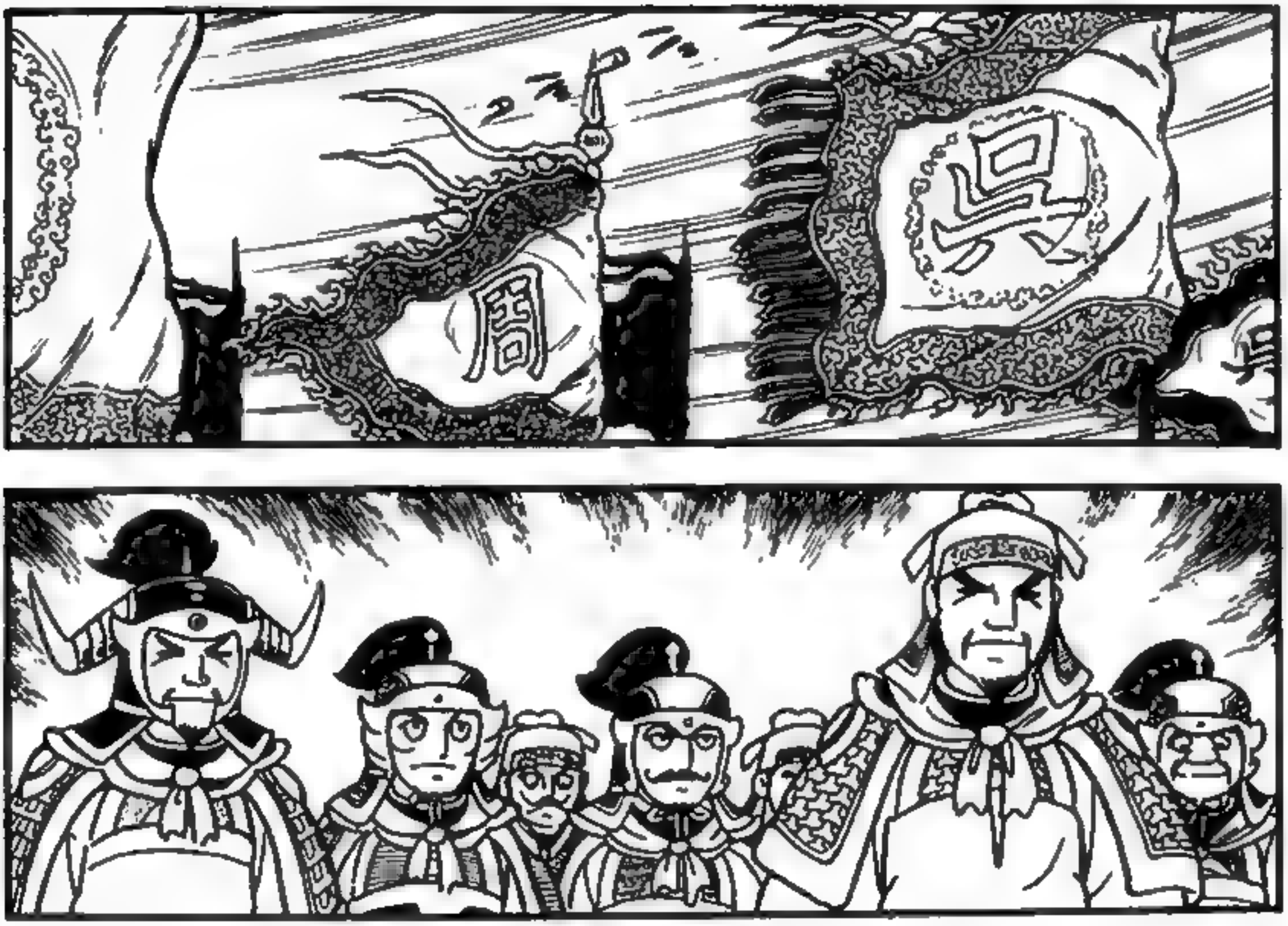
I MYSELF REALIZE JUST HOW DANGEROUS OF A MAN KONGMING IS BUT AT OUR PRESENT MOMENT, CAO CAO IS 10 TIMES MORE DANGEROUS! YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS ABOUT MAKING PEACE WITH CAO CAO AFTER ALL OUR PREPARATIONS!

FORGIVE ME, I LET MY EMOTIONS GET THE BETTER OF ME FOR A MOMENT.

YES, SIR.

ASSEMBLE ALL THE GENERALS!

CAO CAO COMES FIRST AND NOW'S OUR ONLY CHANCE FOR VICTORY...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WHAT SHALL I DO WITH THE OTHER SPY, CAI HE?
GAN NING. TAKE YOUR SOLDIERS ALONG WITH THE SPY CAI ZHONG AND PRETEND YOU'VE DEFECTED SO YOU CAN PASS THROUGH TO WULIN. THERE, YOU ARE TO SET FIRE TO ALL OF THE ENEMY'S PROVISIONS.

UNDER-STOOD, ADMIRAL.

CAI HE WILL REMAIN HERE SO HIS HEAD CAN BE USED AS AN OFFERING FOR THE RITE BEFORE BATTLE.

YES, SIR!

TAKE 3000 SOLDIERS TO HUANGZHOU'S BORDERS AND DEFEAT THE ENEMY REGIMENT AT HUFEI. YOU WILL THEN COME BACK TO ATTACK CAO CAO'S MAIN BASE.

TAISHI CI.

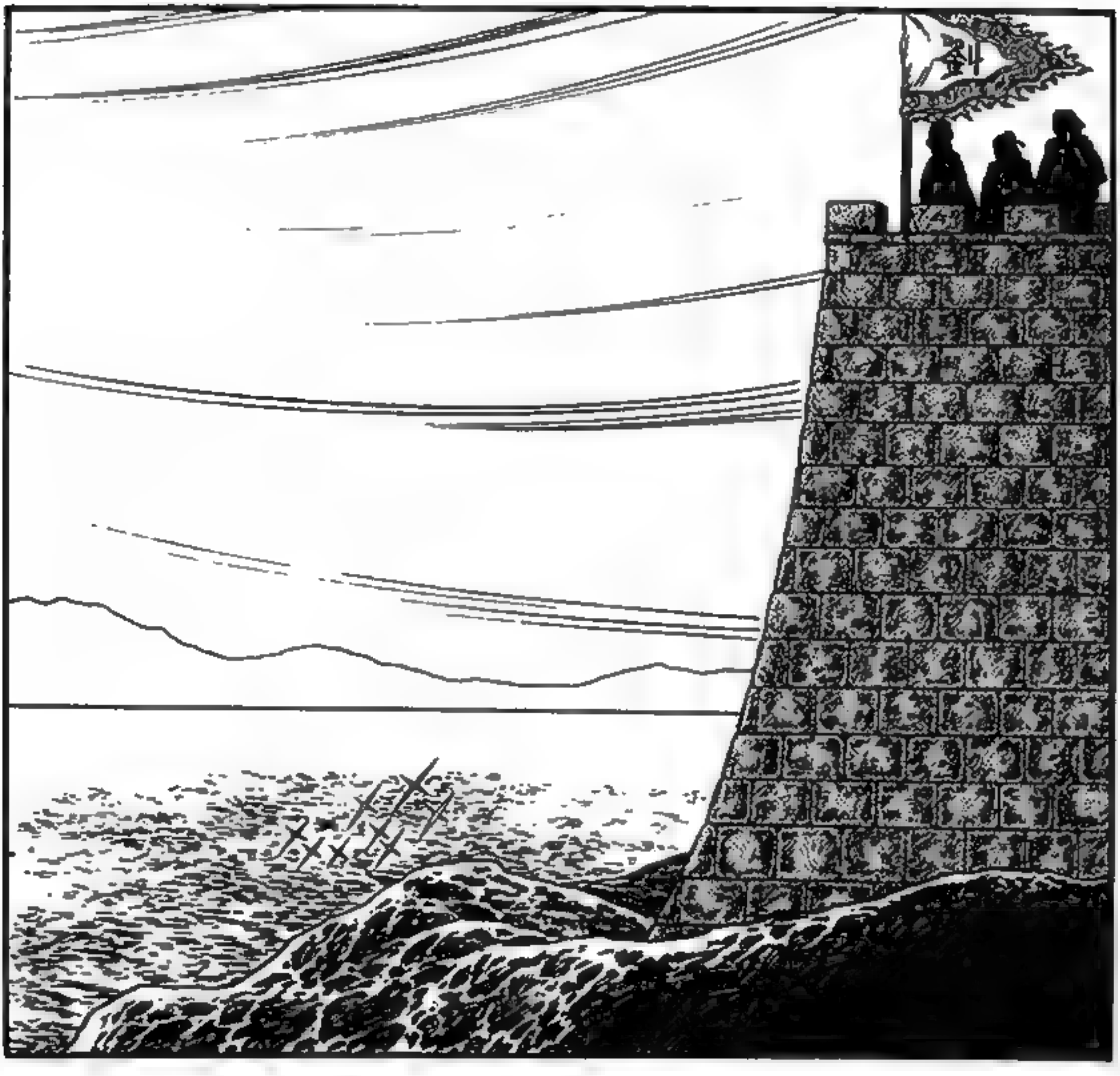
YES?

YES, SIR!

LING TONG! YOU WILL GO TO THE BORDERS OF YILING AND ATTACK WHEN YOU SEE WULIN SET ON FIRE BY GAN NING.

WITHOUT ANY HESITATION, ZHOU YU QUICKLY ANNOUNCED HIS METICULOUSLY PLANNED ORDERS TO HIS GENERALS, ONE BY ONE.
THEY WOULD HAVE TO HURRY IN ORDER TO SIEZE THE CHANCE BLOWING IN THE SOUTHEAST WINDS.

WRITTEN OATH



YES, HE ASKED ZHAO ZILONG TO COME AND ESCORT HIM ON THE 20TH WHEN THE SOUTHEAST WINDS BLOW.
IS TODAY THE DAY HE'S SUPPOSED TO RETURN?
I STILL DON'T SEE KONGMING'S SHIP...

I CAN NEVER UNDERSTAND HOW KONGMING CAN LOOK SO FAR AHEAD INTO THE FUTURE...

HE SHOULD BE ARRIVING ANY MOMENT NOW...

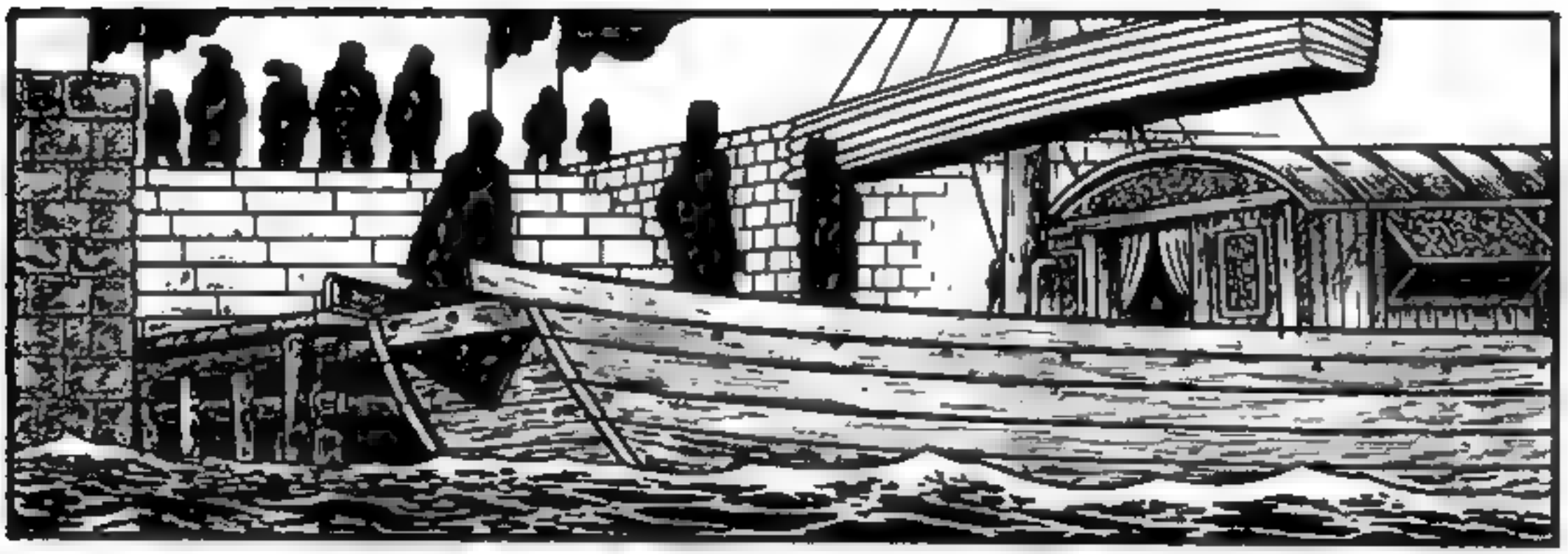
HM?

AH!

LOOK! IT'S ZHAO ZILONG'S SHIP!

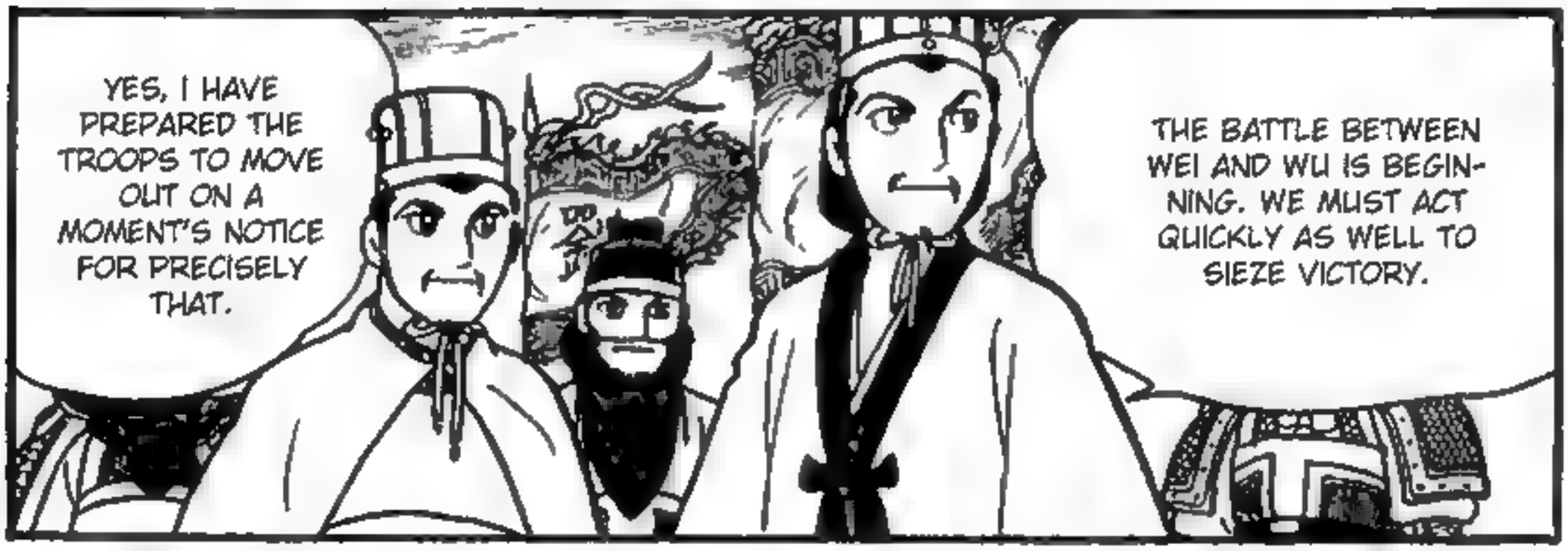
CERTAINLY.

LET US ALL GO AND GIVE KONGMING A WARM WELCOME.



NOW THEN, WHAT'S THE SITUATION?

I WAS QUITE WORRIED FOR YOUR SAFETY.
I AM HONOURED THAT MY LORD HAS COME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE TO GIVE MY SIMPLE SELF A WELCOME.


YES, I HAVE PREPARED THE TROOPS TO MOVE OUT ON A MOMENT'S NOTICE FOR PRECISELY THAT.
THE BATTLE BETWEEN WEI AND WU IS BEGINNING. WE MUST ACT QUICKLY AS WELL TO SIEZE VICTORY.

SPLE-
NDID.

YES, THE TROOPS ONLY AWAIT YOUR COMMAND.

SO ALL IS READY FOR BATTLE?

YES, SIR!

TAKE 3000 SOLDIERS ACROSS THE RIVER TO WULIN AND HIDE IN THE FORESTS. THERE, YOU WILL AWAIT FOR CAO CAO'S ARMY TO PASS HALF-WAY BEFORE AMBUSHING THEM. DO NOT TRY TO ENGAGE ALL THE ENEMIES, YOUR OBJECTIVE IS TO ONLY THROW THE ENEMIES IN CHAOS AND SPLIT UP THEIR ARMY.

ZHAO ZILONG!

YES, SIR!

I HAVE BUT ONE QUESTION. THE ROAD SPLITS UP INTO TWO PATHS AT WULIN. ONE LEADS TO SOUTHERN REGIONS WHILE THE OTHER LEADS TO JINGZHOU. WHICH PATH WILL CAO CAO RETREAT ALONG?

UNDERSTOOD.

CAO CAO WILL TRY TO HEAD BACK TO XUCHANG USING THE ROAD TO JINGZHOU SO SET UP YOUR AMBUSH THERE.

TAKE 3000 TROOPS ACROSS THE RIVER TO HULU VALLEY AT NORTH YILING. THERE, YOU ARE TO POSITION YOUR MEN FOR AN AMBUSH.

IS IT FINALLY MY TURN?

ZHANG FEI.

CAO CAO WILL MOST DEFINITELY RETREAT ALONG SOUTH YILING AND NOT NORTH YILING. AFTER THE RAIN STOPS TOMORROW, HE WILL TEMPORARILY STOP THERE TO ALLOW HIS EXHAUSTED SOLDIERS TO EAT AND REST. THE SMOKE RISING FROM THEIR COOKING FIRES SHALL BE YOUR SIGNAL TO ATTACK.

UHH... UNDERSTOOD, COMMANDER.

EXACTLY.

SO IT'LL RAIN TOMORROW, THEN STOP, AND THEN THE ENEMIES WILL JUST START COOKING...?

YES, SIR!

MI ZHU, MI FANG, LILI FENG. TAKE THREE SQUADRONS AND WAIT ALONG THE RIVER UNTIL YOU SEE WEI'S ARMY THROWN INTO UTTER DISORDER. YOU WILL THEN USE THAT CHANCE TO STEAL THEIR SUPPLIES AND PROVISIONS.

UNDERSTOOD.

LIU QI. STATION YOUR TROOPS AROUND WUCHANG AND TAKE CAPTIVE ANY FLEEING ENEMY SOLDIERS.

COMM-
ANDER!

YES.

AS FOR OUR LORD AND MYSELF, WE SHALL OBSERVE THE SITUATION FROM THE HILLS OF FANKOU AND CONFIRM IF ZHOU YU INDEED ACCOMPLISHES HIS JOB OR NOT.

YES?

AH, IS THAT WHAT BOTHERS YOU?

YOU'VE ISSUED AN ORDER TO EVERY GENERAL BUT MYSELF. IN THE PAST, YOU'VE TRUSTED ME MANY TIMES WITH THE TASK OF LEADING THE FIRST ATTACK SO WHY IS IT THAT YOU LEAVE ME WITH NOTHING TO DO IN THIS MOST CRITICAL BATTLE?

AND WHAT IS THAT, IF I MAY ASK?

AS MUCH AS I WOULD LIKE YOUR HELP, THERE'S ONE THING THAT TROUBLES ME...

YES, BUT I BELIEVE I HAVE REPAID MY DEBTS TO HIM WHEN I SLAYED YAN LIANG AND WEN CHOU.

YOU HAVE BEEN INDEBTED TO CAO CAO IN THE PAST AND I'M SURE YOU HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN IT.

A NEEDLESS WORRY, SIR! IF I DO LET MY TRIVIAL EMOTIONS GET THE BETTER OF ME, THEN I FULLY ACCEPT WHATEVER PUNISHMENT BY MILITARY LAW!

SO YOU SAY, BUT I WONDER IF YOU WOULD REALLY HAVE THE HEART TO KILL CAO CAO WHEN YOU SEE HIM AND HIS MEN IN THEIR MOST PITIFUL STATES.

KONGMING, I BEG YOU RECONSIDER. IF YOU RELEGATE GUAN YU TO MERE GUARD DUTY, YOU WILL SLIGHT HIS HONOUR AND MAKE HIS SUBORDINATES LOSE RESPECT FOR HIM.

GLADLY.

AS YOU WISH THEN, GENERAL. I ONLY ASK YOU WRITE AN OATH STATING YOU WILL ACCEPT WHATEVER PUNISHMENT IN CASE YOU WERE TO FAIL.

WILL THIS DO?

BUT WOULDN'T THE SMOKE TIP OFF CAO CAO TO OUR LOCATION, CAUSING HIM TO FLEE ALONG ANOTHER PATH?

?

YES, THIS WILL DO. NOW THEN, YOUR ORDER IS TO HIDE YOUR TROOPS AT HUARONG HILLS AND SET A FEW FIRES TO MAKE COLUMNS OF SMOKE.

WHAT THEN, DO YOU SUPPOSE HE WILL MAKE OF THE SMOKE?

CAO CAO IS NOT ONLY WELL VERSED IN WAR, BUT HE IS ALSO NATURALLY SUSPICIOUS.

NO, THE RULES OF WAR TELL ONE TO CONCEAL TRUTH AS LIES, AND LIES AS TRUTH.

ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT YOU MUST UNDERSTAND YOUR ENEMIES TO WIN IN WAR, GENERAL.

HE WILL SURELY BELIEVE IT IS A TRICK TO DECEIVE HIM INTO THINKING THERE ARE ENEMIES UP AHEAD. THAT IS WHY HE WILL WALK RIGHT INTO YOUR AMBUSH.

YES, SIR.

NOW IF YOU UNDERSTAND, YOU SHOULD MOVE ON OUT IMMEDIATELY.

……

KONGMING, NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, PERHAPS SENDING GUAN YU ISN'T THE BEST IDEA...

YES, I'M SURE HE WON'T.

I KNOW GUAN YU TO BE A MAN WHO VALUES HONOUR AND VIRTUE MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE. DESPITE HIS CONFIDENT CLAIMS, I FEAR HE MAY NOT BRING HIMSELF TO CUT DOWN CAO CAO WHEN THE TIME COMES.

I HAVE CONSULTED THE STARS, AND CAO CAO'S FORTUNES, THOUGH WEAK, SHALL NOT COME TO AN END.

WHAT!?

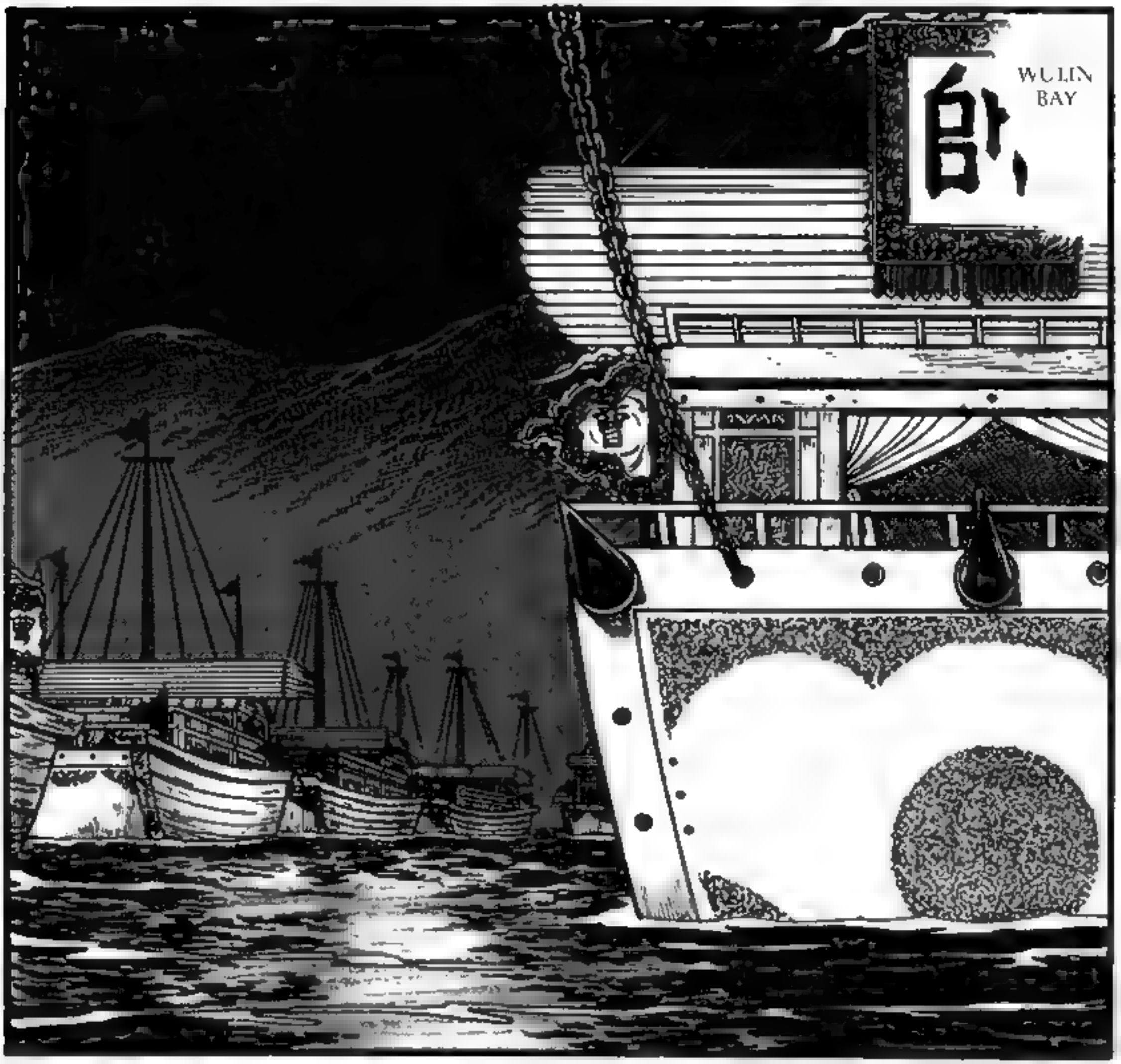
Y-YOU EVEN THOUGHT THAT FAR AHEAD...?

IF IT IS FATED THAT CAO CAO WILL SURVIVE, THEN IT IS BEST TO ASSIGN GUAN YU WITH THIS TASK SO HE CAN COMPLETELY REPAY HIS DEBTS SO THAT THERE WILL BE NO FURTHER CAUSE OF HESITATION IN THE FUTURE.

YES.

NOW THEN, LET US GO TO FANKOU AND ENJOY THE GREAT SHOW ZHOU YU HAS IN STORE FOR US.

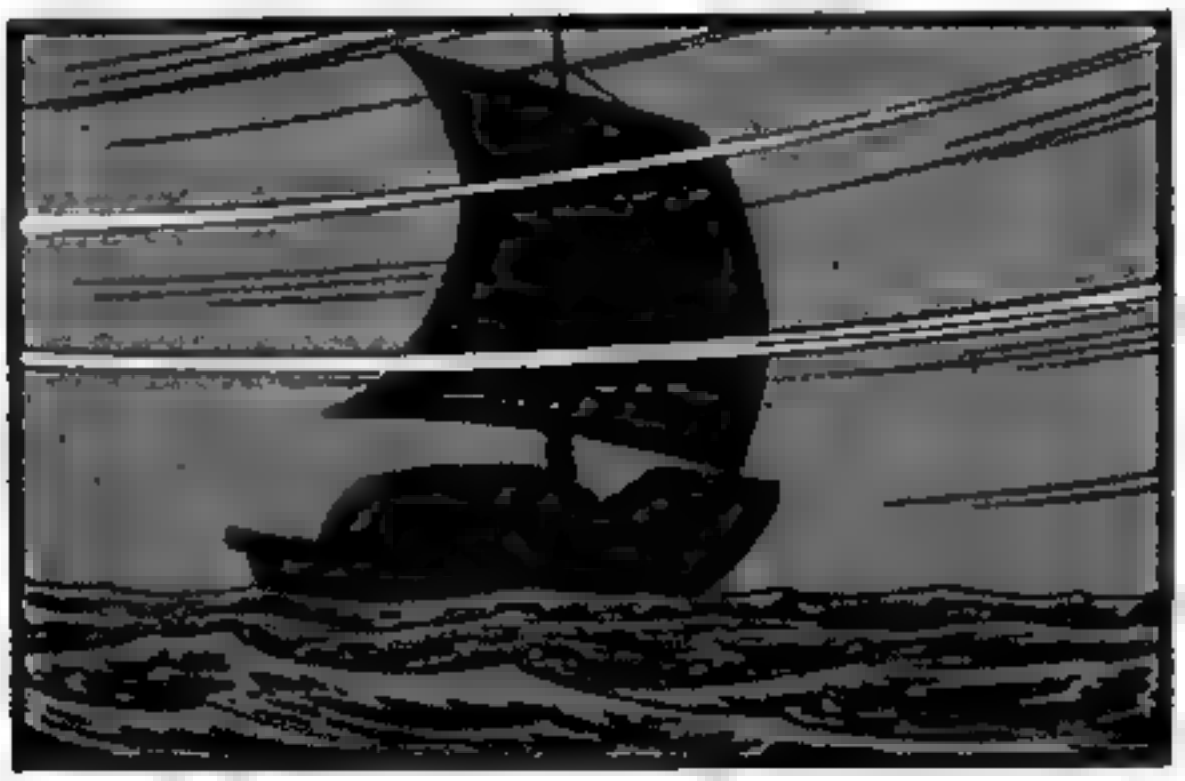
BLUE DRAGON FLAG



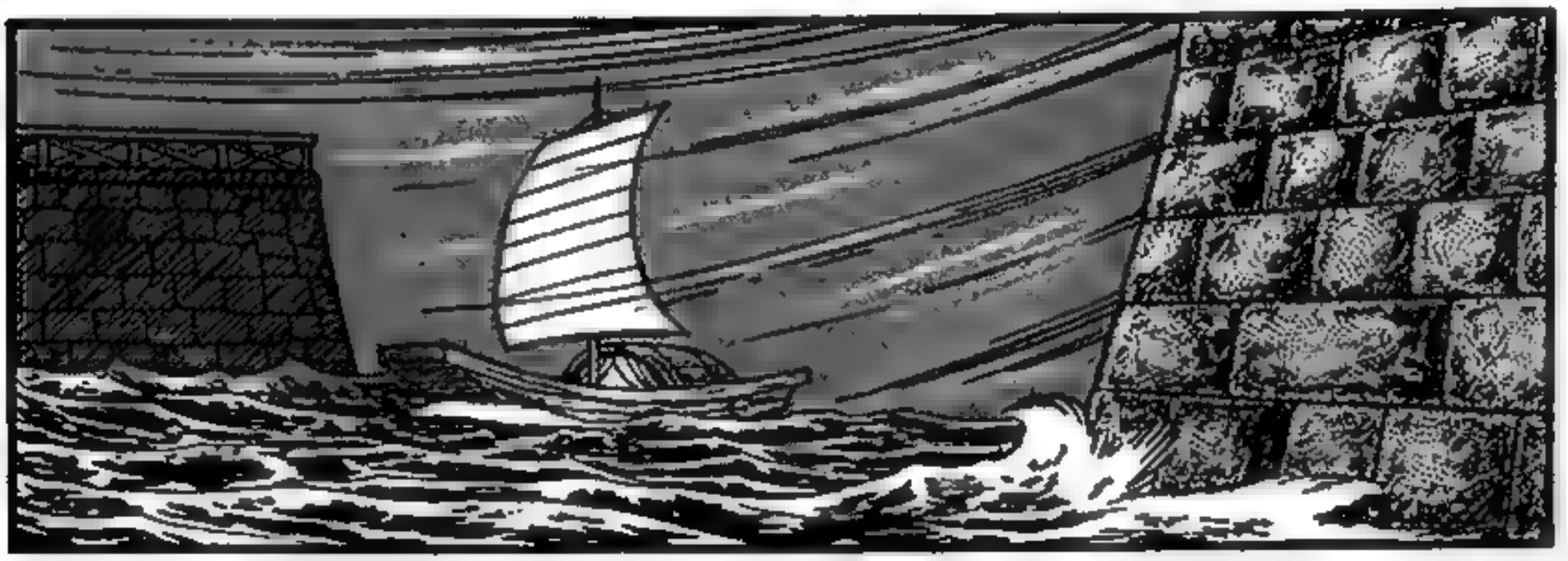
THIS SEEMS RATHER OMINOUS, SHOULD WE NOT TAKE CAUTION?

THE WINDS HAVE CHANGED DIRECTION.

A TEMPORARY OCCURENCE, THAT'S ALL. THERE'S NO NEED FOR FURTHER CONCERN.



HM?

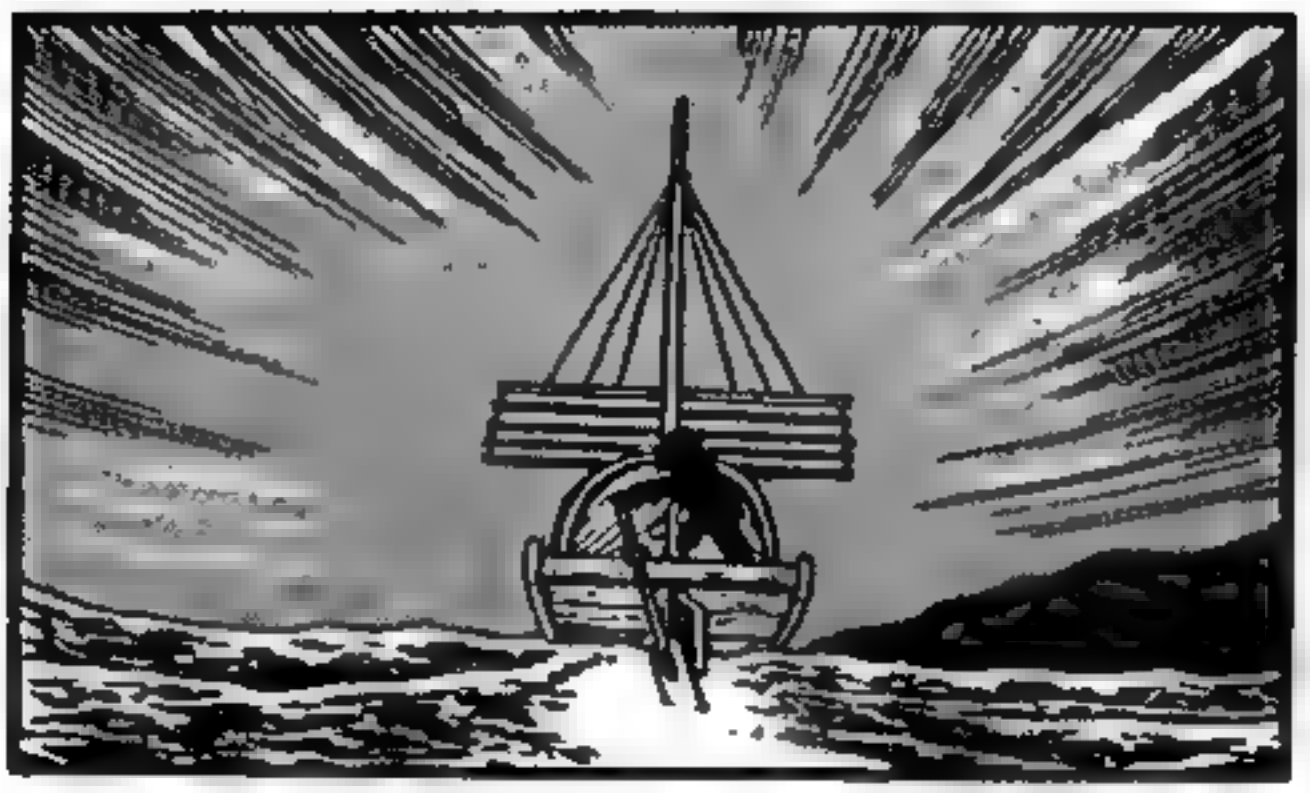


I AM GENERAL HUANG GAI'S MESSENGER. I BRING FORTH HIS LETTER.

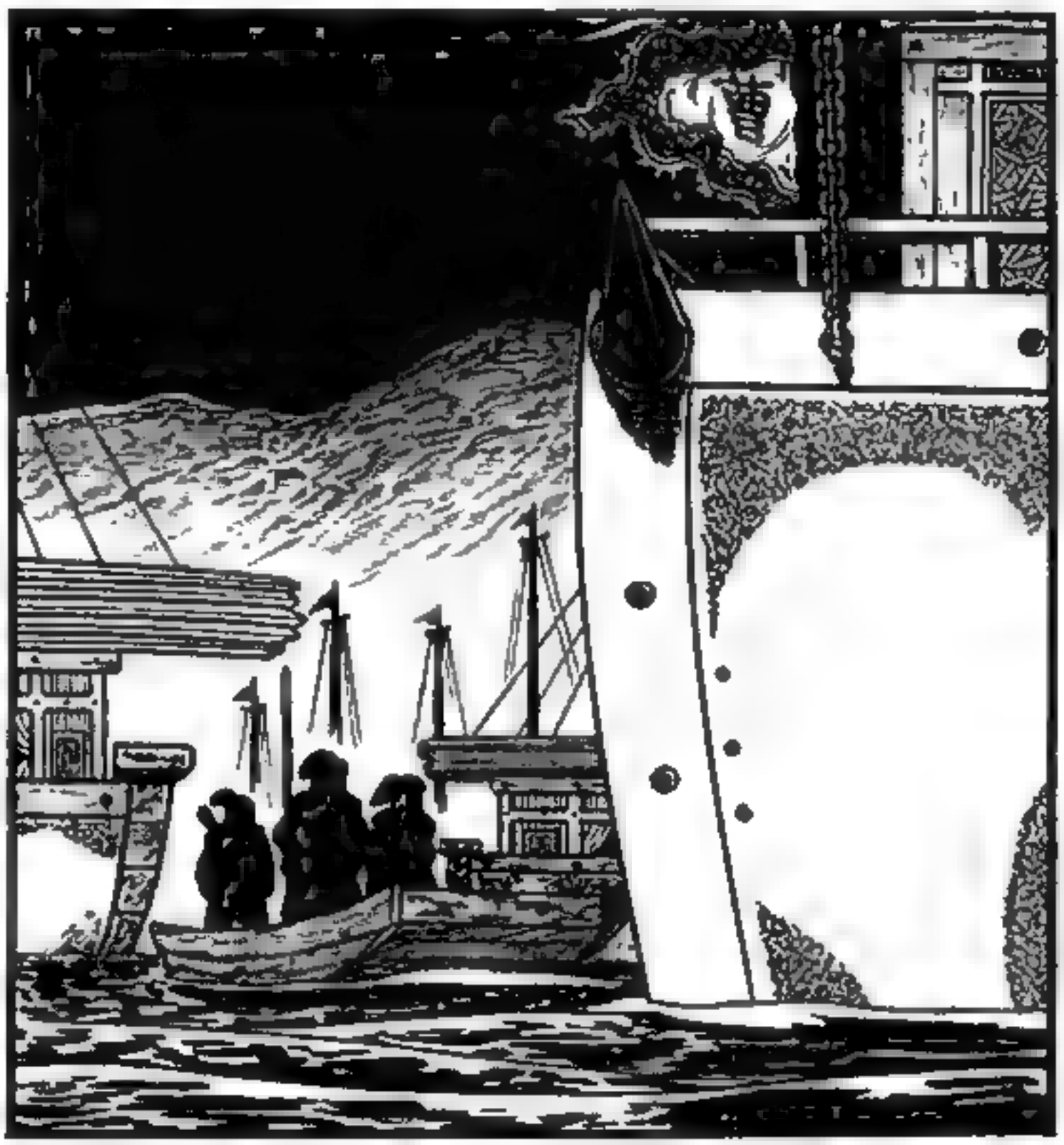
HALT! IDENTIFY YOURSELF!

FINE.

PLEASE PASS THIS MESSAGE ONTO THE CHANCELLOR.



I SHALL TAKE MY LEAVE THEN.



TAKE A LOOK FOR YOURSELVES!

WHAT IS WRITTEN IN THE LETTER?

IT SEEMS THESE WINDS ARE BRINGING VICTORY TO MY GRASP.

ZHOU YU'S STRICT WATCH HAS PREVENTED ME FROM MAKING MY MOVE BUT THE TIME TO ACT HAS FINALLY COME. I HAVE RECENTLY BEEN ASSIGNED WITH ESCORTING THE SUPPLIES FROM POYANG LAKE AND IT IS THESE SUPPLIES THAT WILL BE MY GIFT TO THE CHANCELLOR AS I COME JOIN SIR'S SIDE THIS EVENING. MY BOATS WILL BE MARKED WITH BLUE DRAGON FLAGS.

YES, SIR.

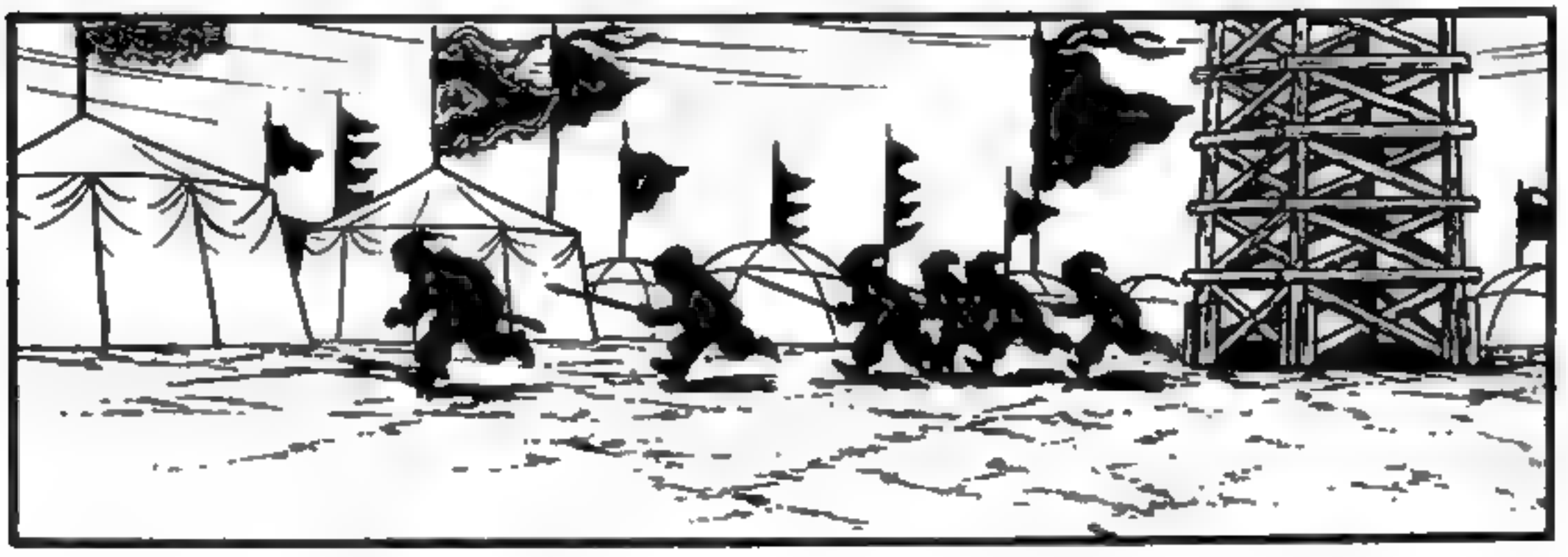
TELL THE MEN THEY ARE TO LET BOATS WITH BLUE DRAGON FLAGS INSIDE THE BAY.

WITH WU'S GRAINS, SUPPLIES, AND EVEN GENERALS ON MY SIDE, MY VICTORY IS ALREADY ASSURED...!

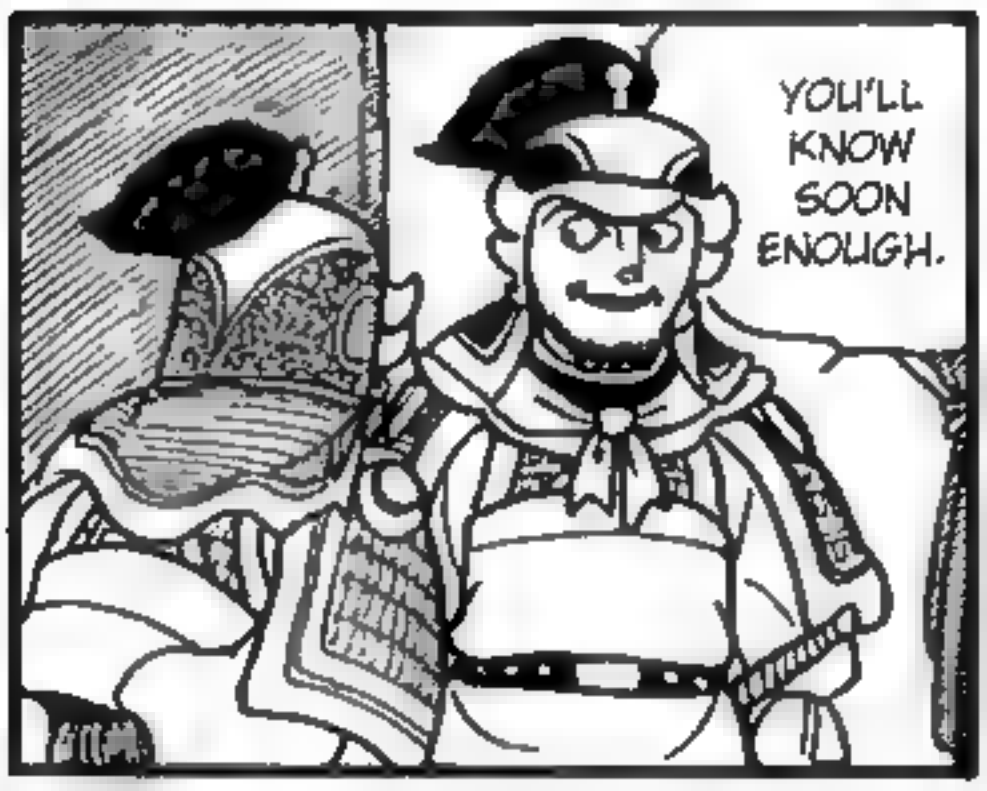
THEN IT'S TIME FOR US TO MAKE OUR MOVE AS WELL. GO BRING CAI HE TO ME.

YES, SIR.

GOOD.
ADMIRAL, THE OTHER GENERALS HAVE ALL LEFT WITH THEIR TROOPS FOR THEIR MISSIONS.



W-WHAT'RE YOU DOING!? AREN'T WE ON THE SAME SIDE HERE!?


YOU'LL KNOW SOON ENOUGH.

CAI HE, THE ADMIRAL REQUESTS YOUR PRESENCE!

WELL DONE.
I BRING YOU CAI HE, ADMIRAL.

I'M AFRAID YOU'VE OUTLIVED YOUR USEFULNESS.

WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS, ADMIRAL!?

I'VE ONLY KEPT YOU ALIVE SO YOU COULD SEND FALSE REPORTS TO CAO CAO.

I'VE KNOWN ALL ALONG THAT YOU WERE CAO CAO'S SPY.

USEFUL-NESS!?

YOUR FRIEND CAI ZHONG IS CURRENTLY LEADING MY MEN DEEP WITHIN WEI'S BASE. ONCE THAT'S DONE, HE'LL BE KILLED ON THE SPOT.

BUT I HAVE NO MORE NEED FOR THAT SINCE OUR PREPARATIONS ARE COMPLETE.

AGHH!

AS FOR YOU, I SHALL USE YOUR HEAD AS THE SACRIFICE FOR THE PRE-BATTLE RITES.

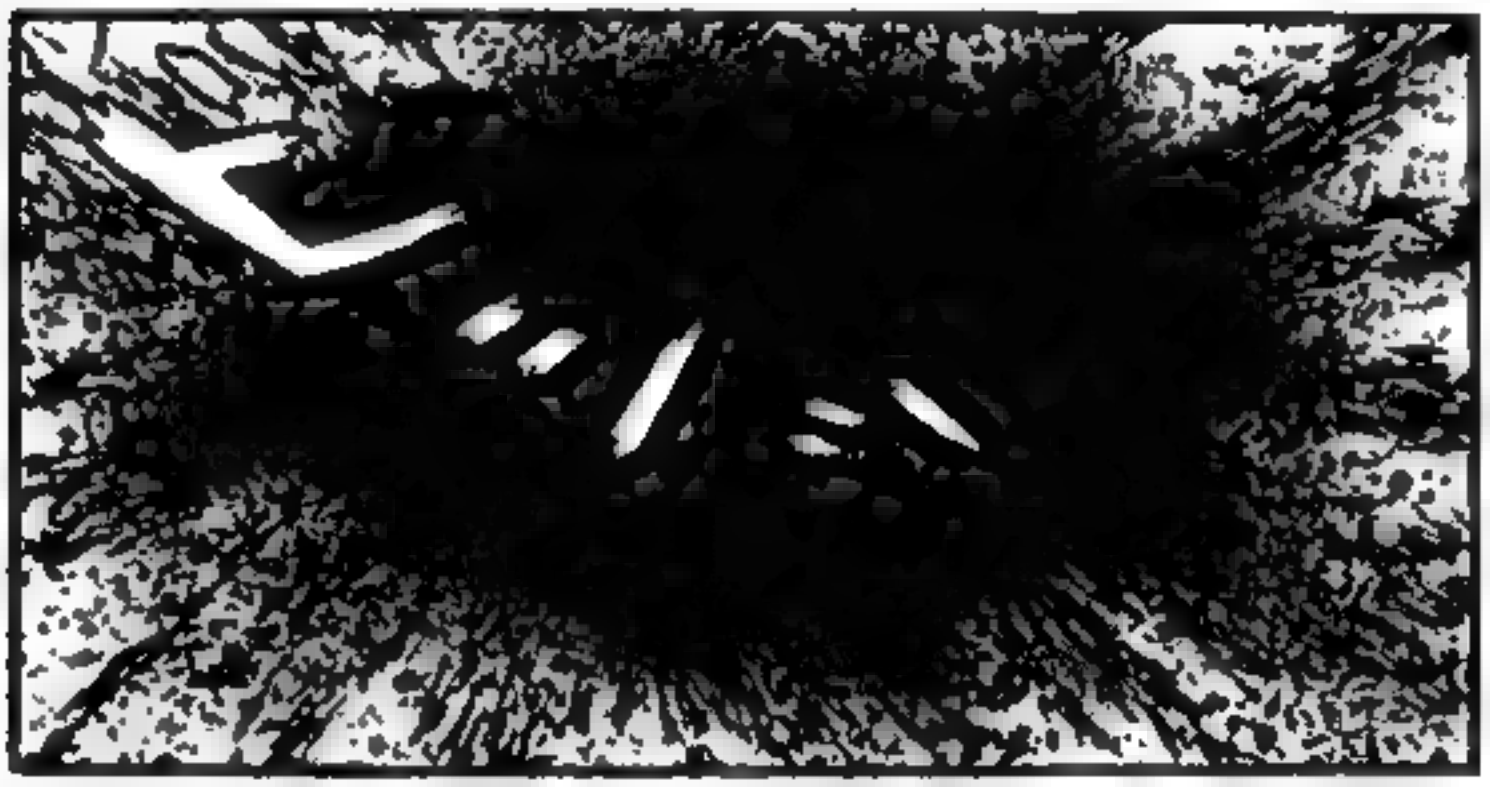
NO! I DON'T WANT TO DIE!

AHHH!

COME ON THEN.

I BEG OF YOU TO PLEASE SPARE MY LIFE!

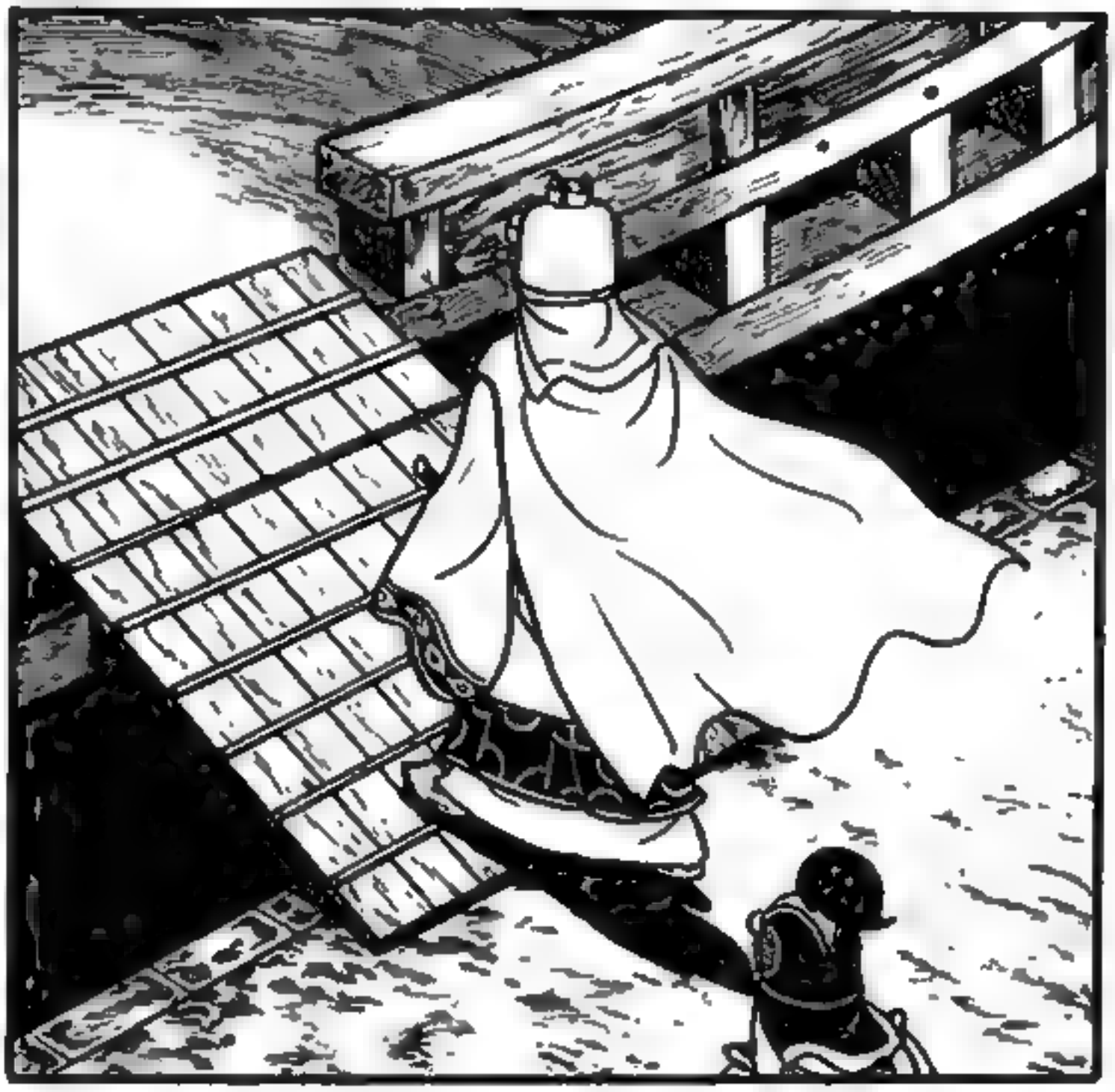
AGHH!

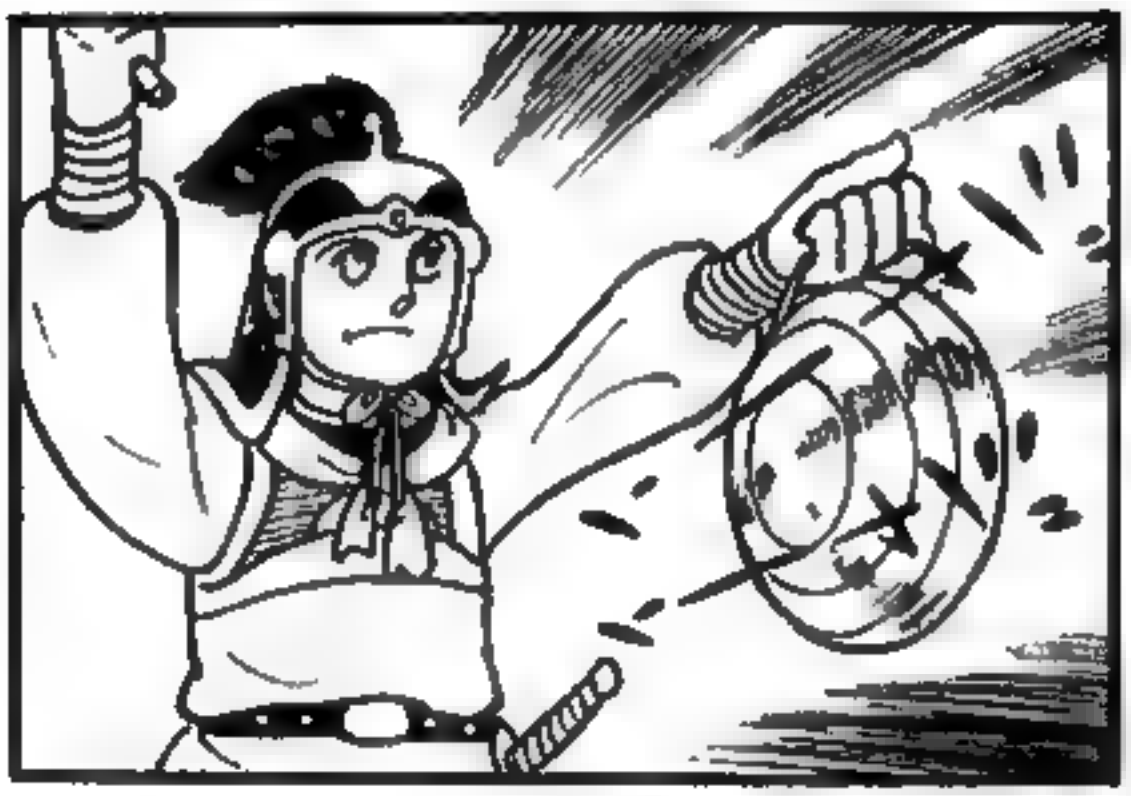


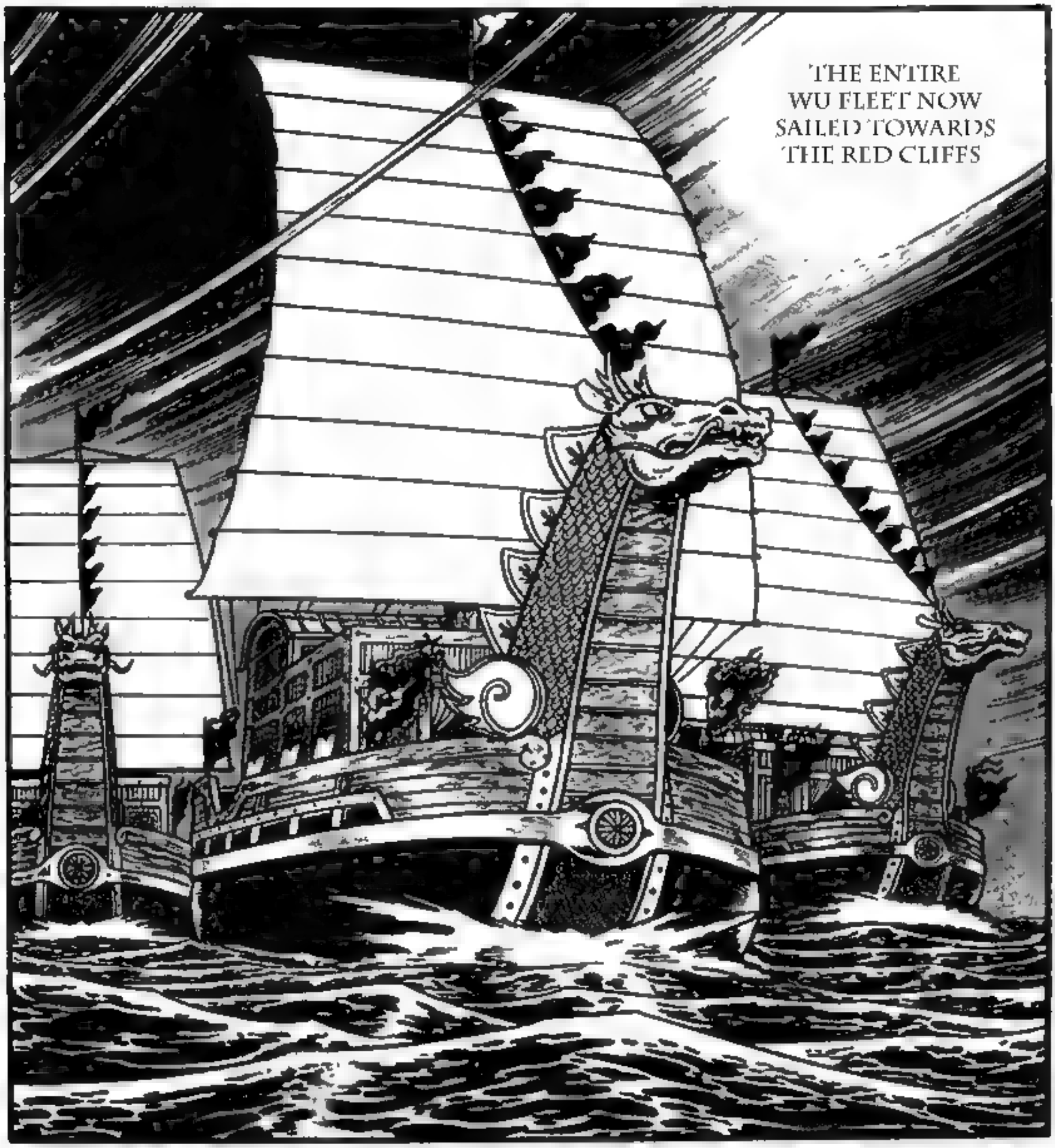
O' HEAVEN! IN EXCHANGE FOR THIS HEAD, WE ASK FOR YOUR BENEVOLENCE IN GUIDING OUR FORCES TO VICTORY!

LET'S MOVE ON OUT, MEN!

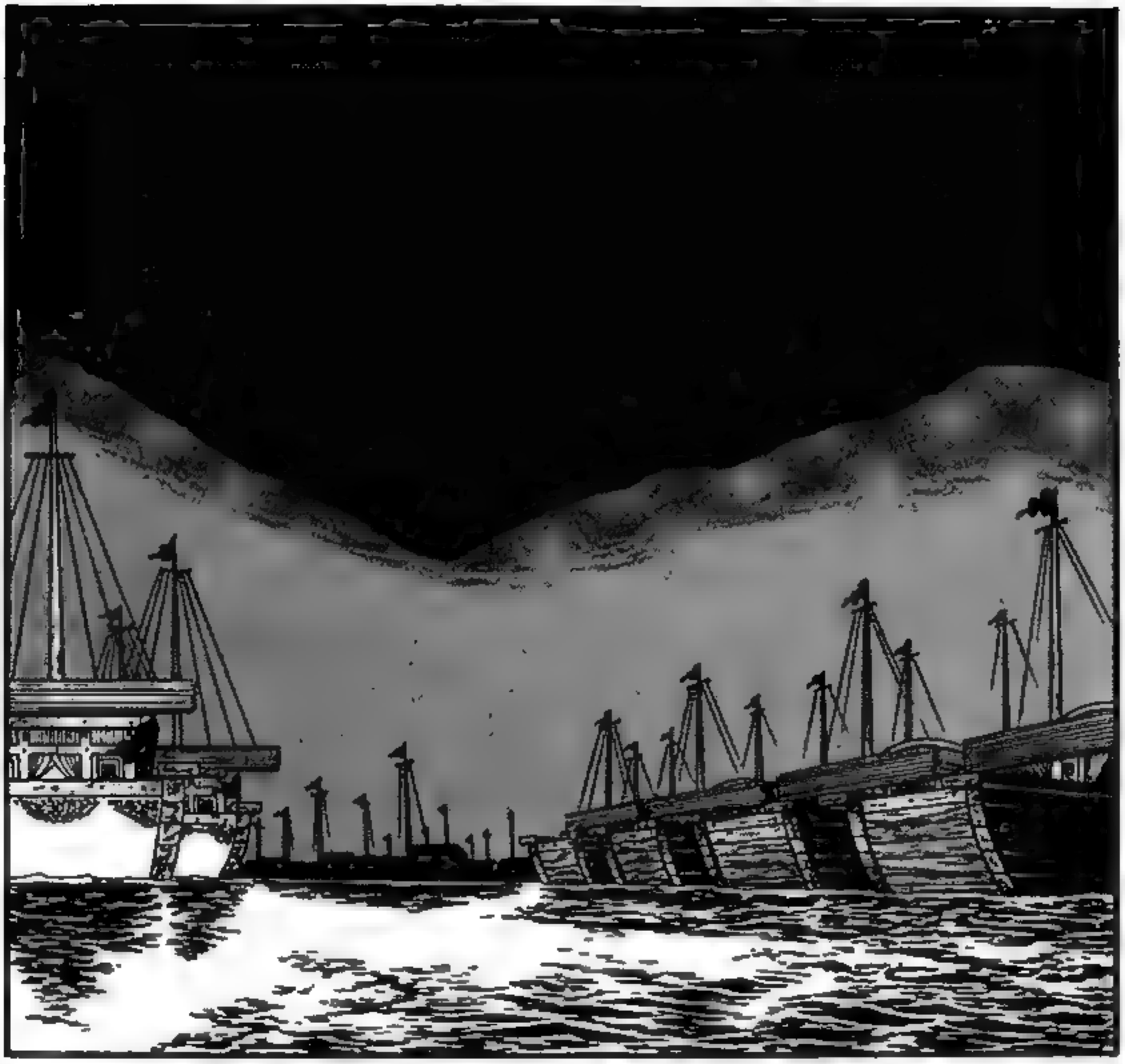
THANK YOU, LU SU. I SHALL LEAVE YOU IN CHARGE OF THE BASE WHILE I'M GONE.
WE SHALL PRAY FOR YOUR VICTORY, ADMIRAL.

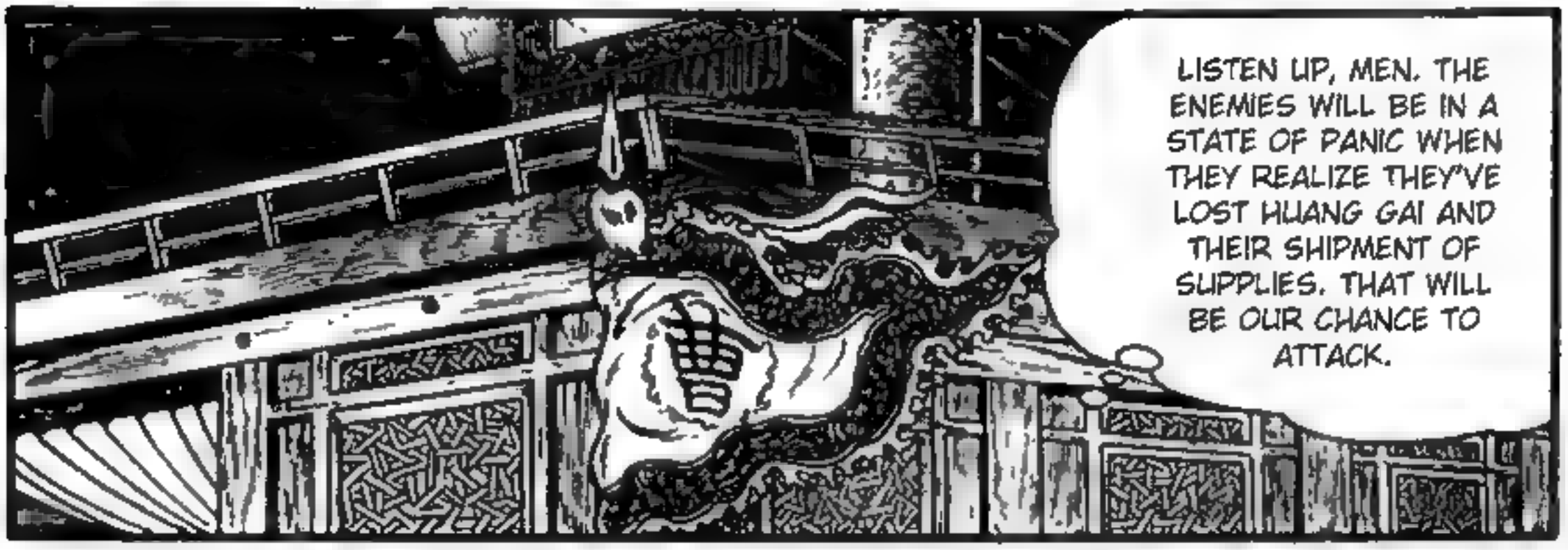


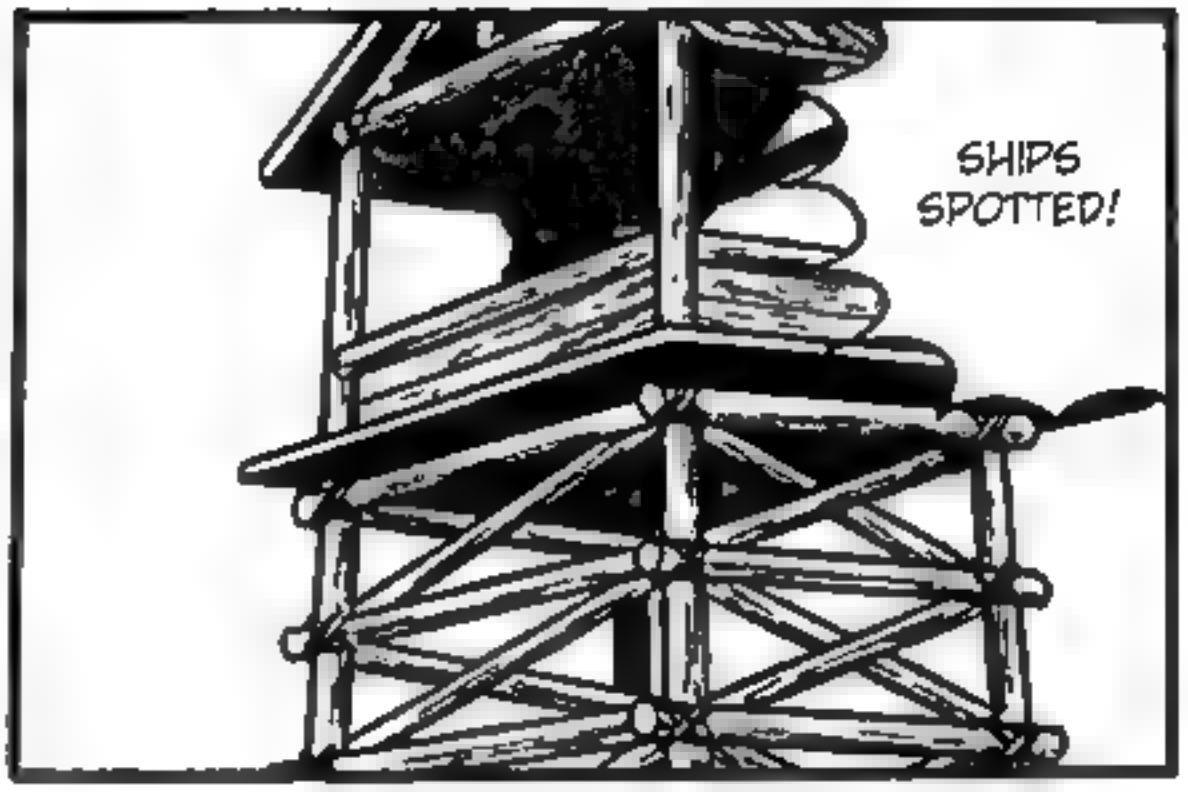



THE ENTIRE
WU FLEET NOW
SAILED TOWARDS
THE RED CLIFFS

BATTLE OF RED CLIFFS

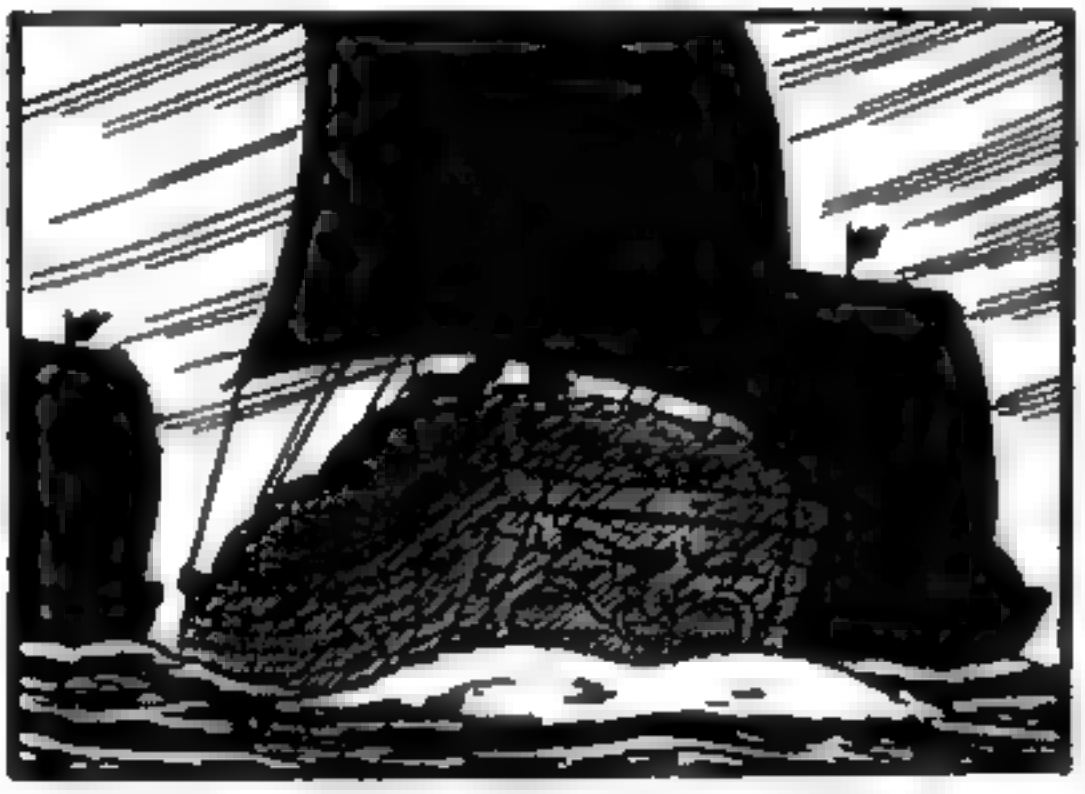



LISTEN UP, MEN. THE ENEMIES WILL BE IN A STATE OF PANIC WHEN THEY REALIZE THEY'VE LOST HUANG GAI AND THEIR SHIPMENT OF SUPPLIES. THAT WILL BE OUR CHANCE TO ATTACK.

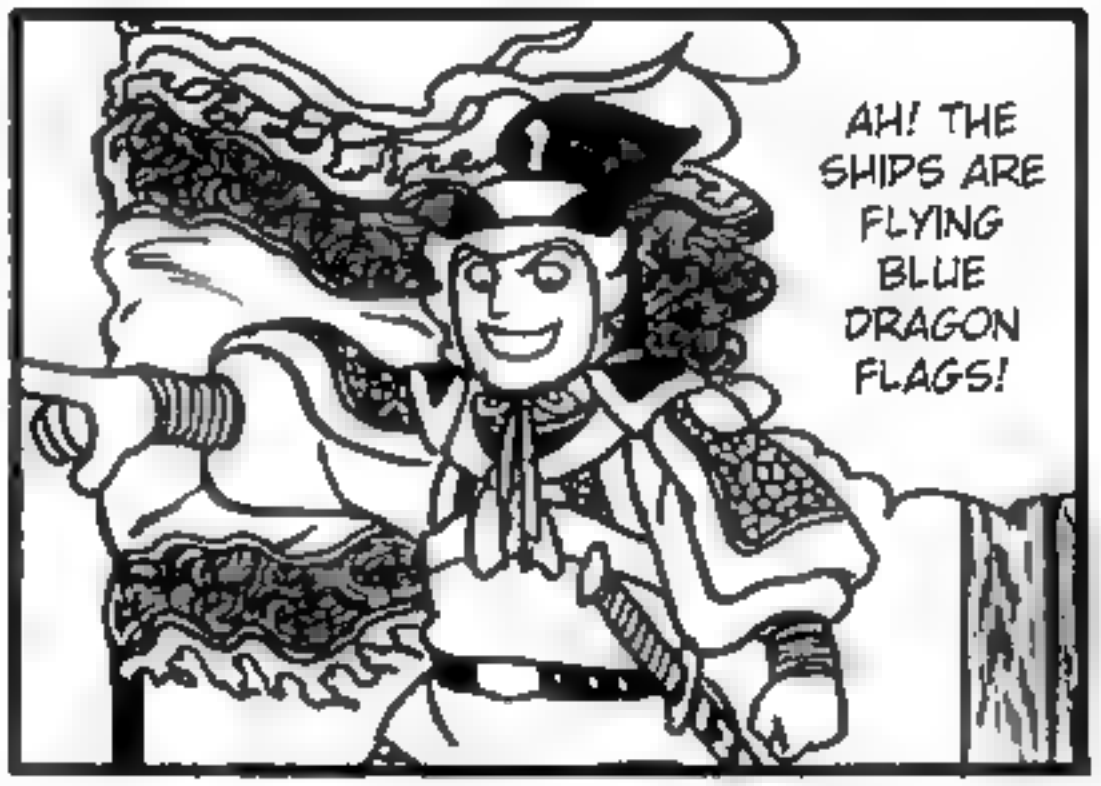

SHIPS SPOTTED!

CAN YOU SEE THEIR FLAGS!?

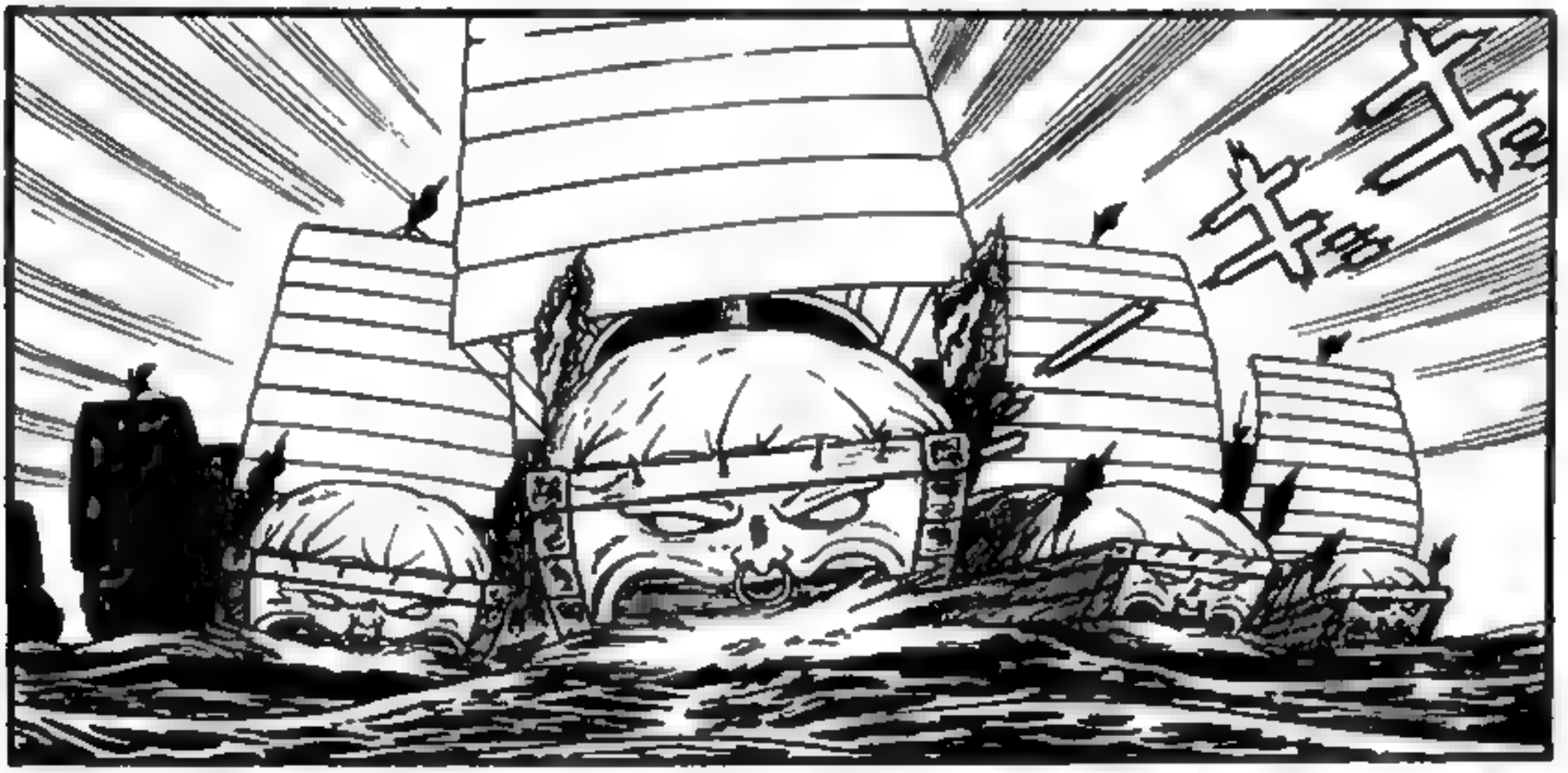
THERE APPEARS TO BE A GROUP OF SHIPS HEADED OUR WAY, SIR.



OHHH! THEN THEY MUST BE HUANG GAI'S SHIPS!


AH! THE SHIPS ARE FLYING BLUE DRAGON FLAGS!

LET THEM INTO THE BAY!



WHAT IS IT?

CHANCELLOR, THIS IS VERY SUSPICIOUS.

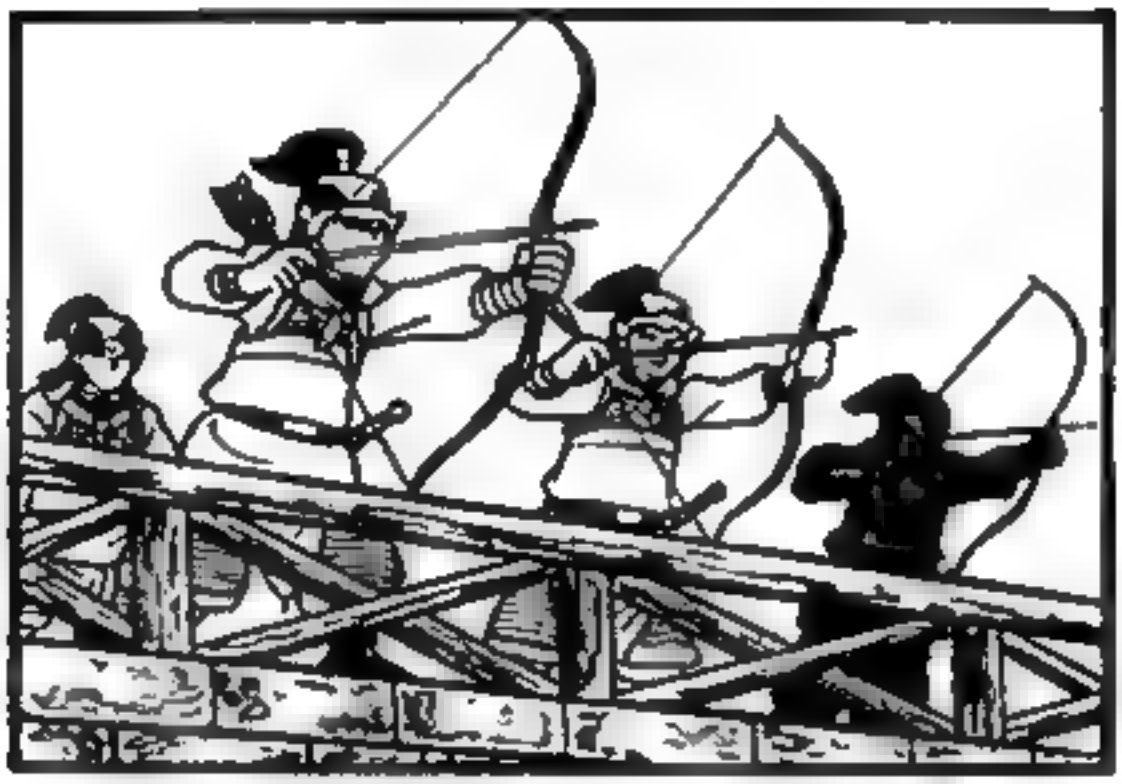
HM?

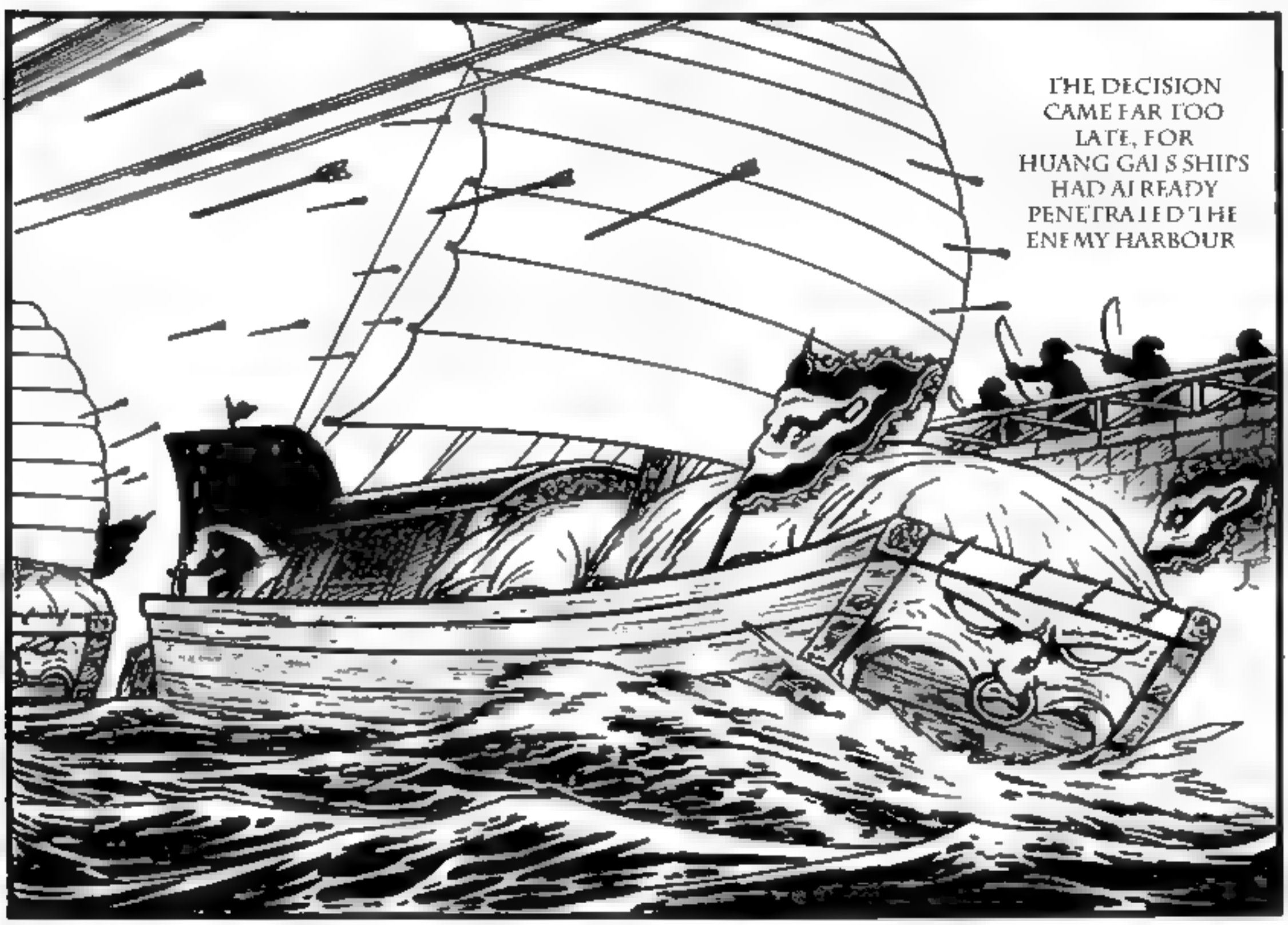
WHAT!?

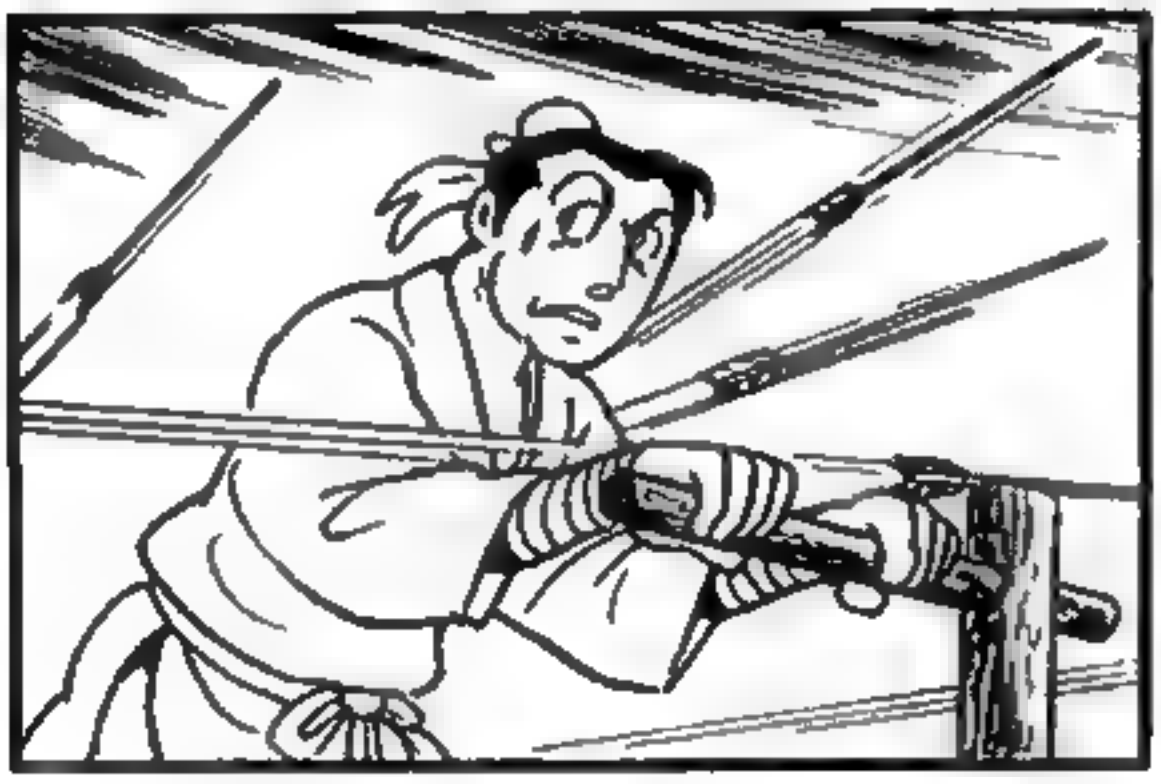
IF THOSE SHIPS ARE REALLY CARRYING GRAINS AND OTHER SUPPLIES, THEY SHOULD SINK DEEPER IN THE WATER. I FEAR THEY MAY BE CARRYING SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY.

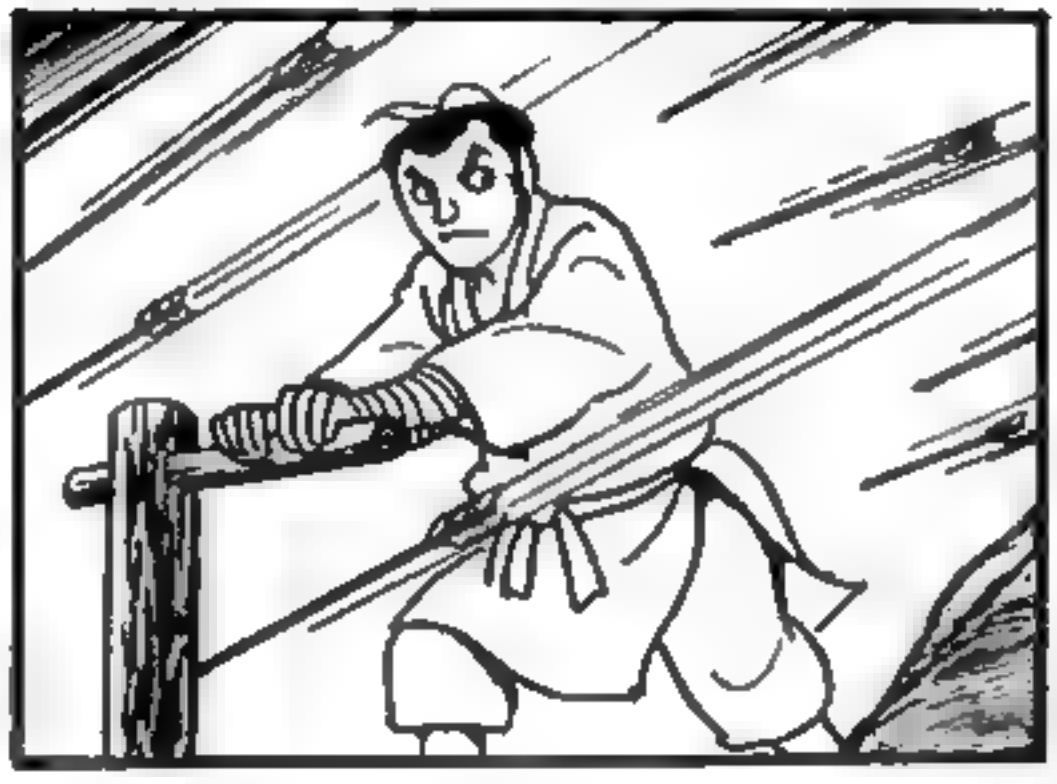
YOU'RE RIGHT. VERY SUSPICIOUS, INDEED.

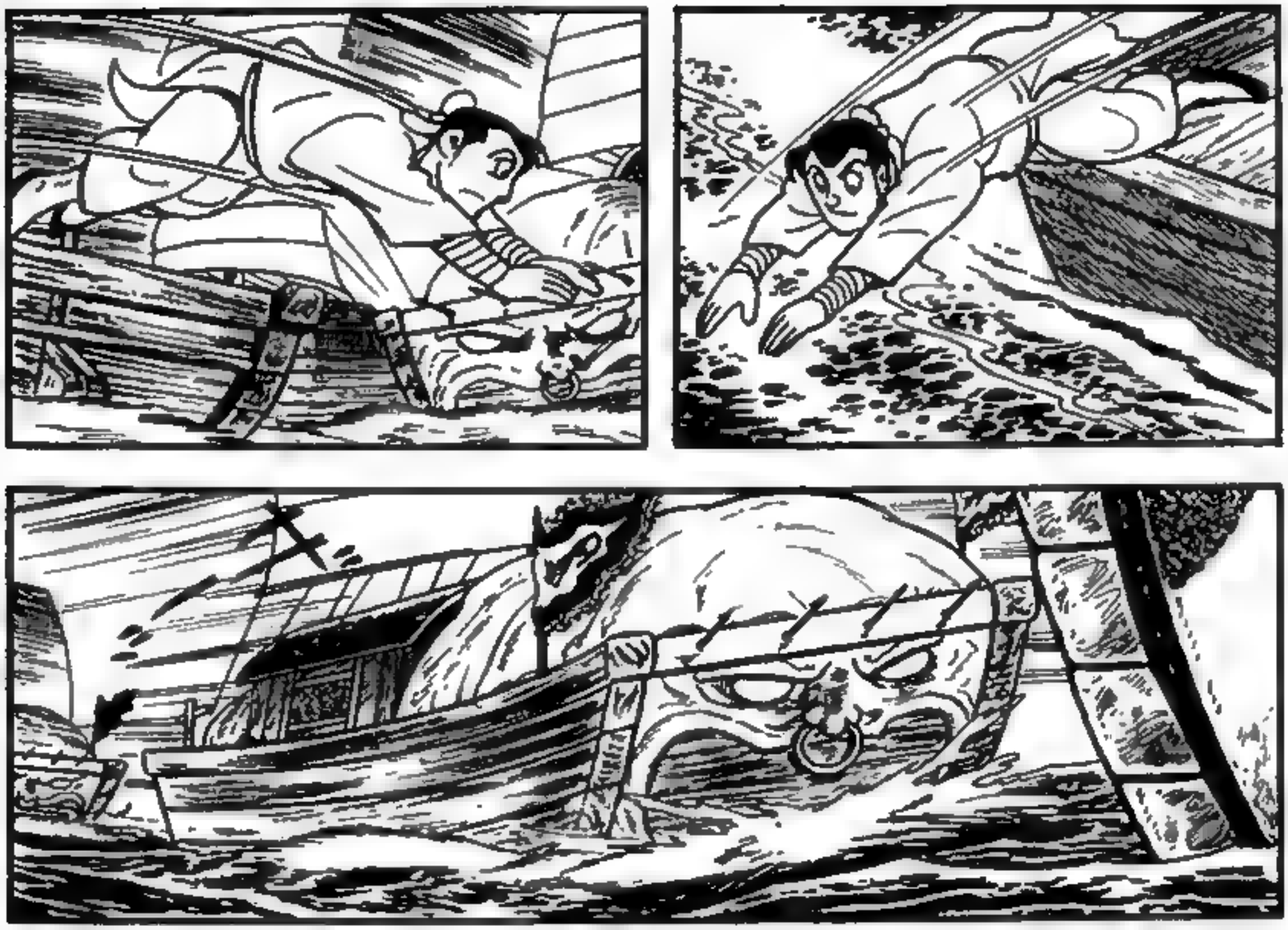
DO NOT LET THE SHIPS INTO THE BAY!




THE DECISION
CAME FAR TOO
LATE, FOR
HUANG GAI'S SHIPS
HAD ALREADY
PENETRATED THE
ENEMY HARBOUR

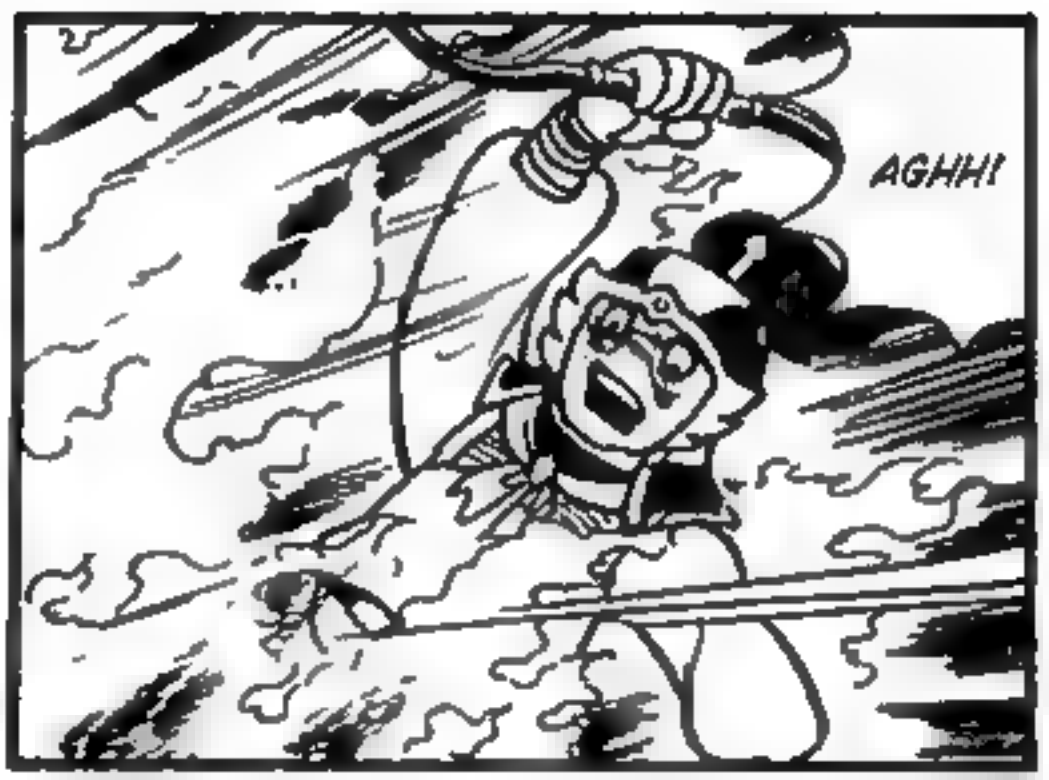






SHOOT THE FLAMING ARROWS!

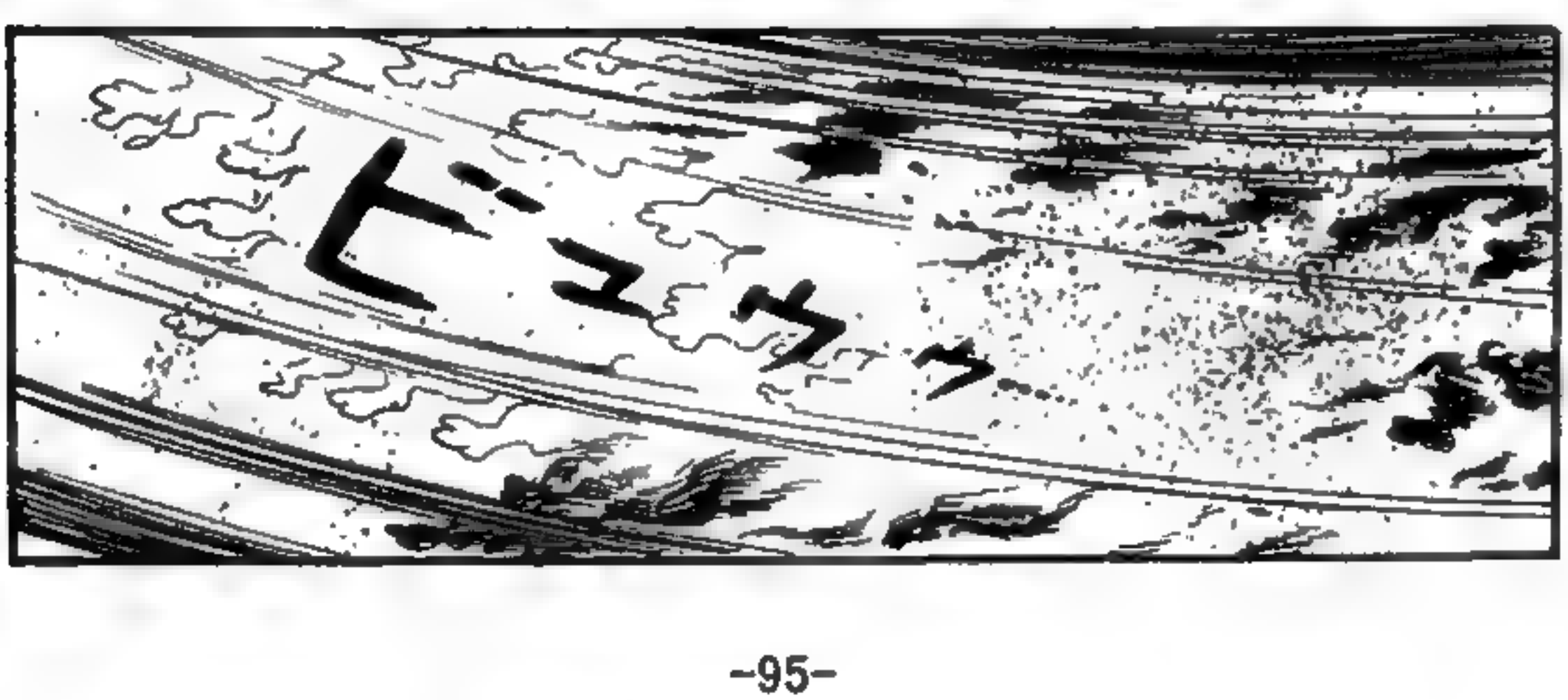
PUSH THE ENEMY SHIPS AWAY!


AGHH!

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE, SIR! THE NAILS HAVE DUG IN TOO DEEPLY!

CURSES!

YES.
IT'S TOO DANGEROUS HERE, CHANCELLOR! PLEASE EVACUATE TO LAND IMMEDIATELY!

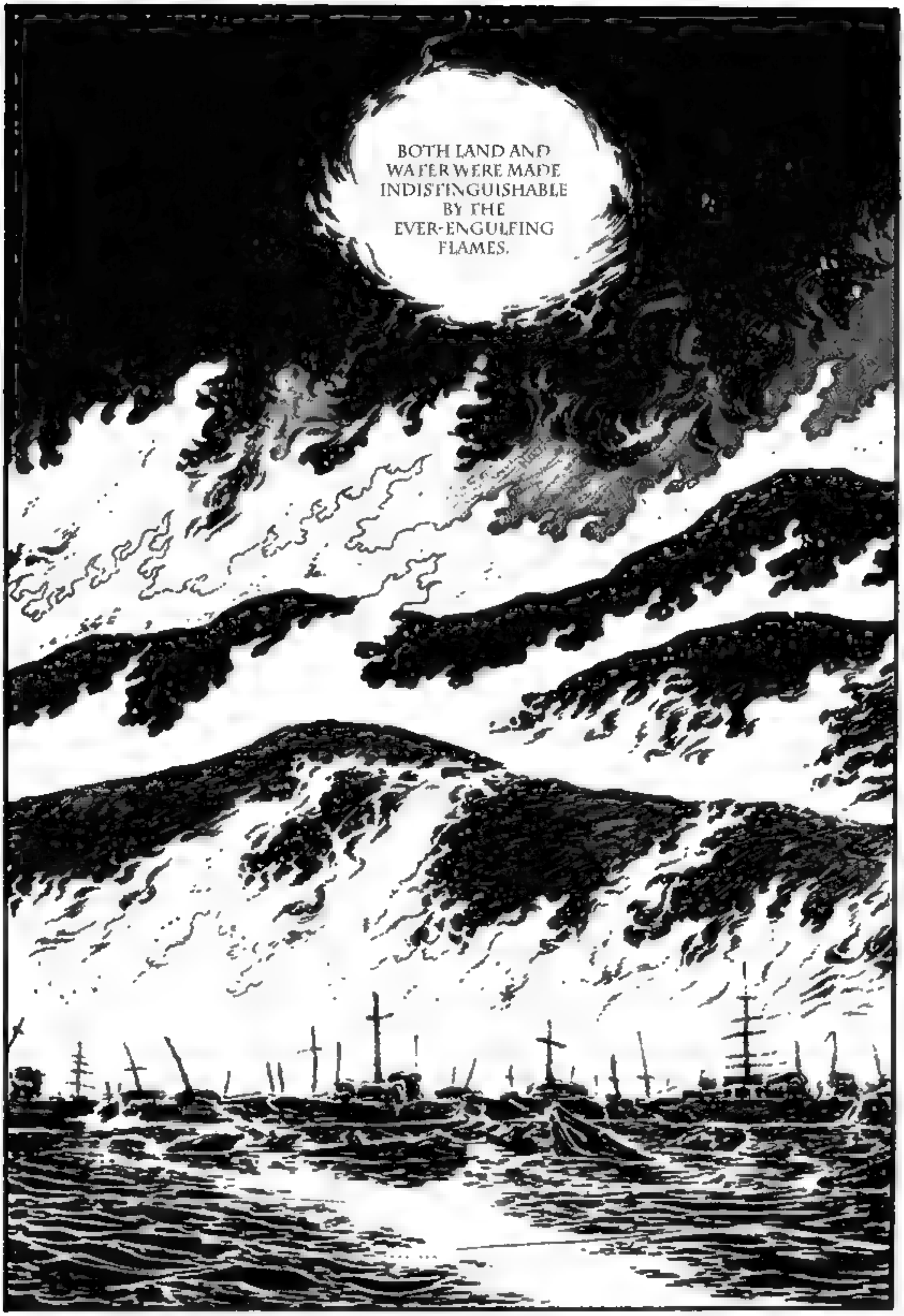


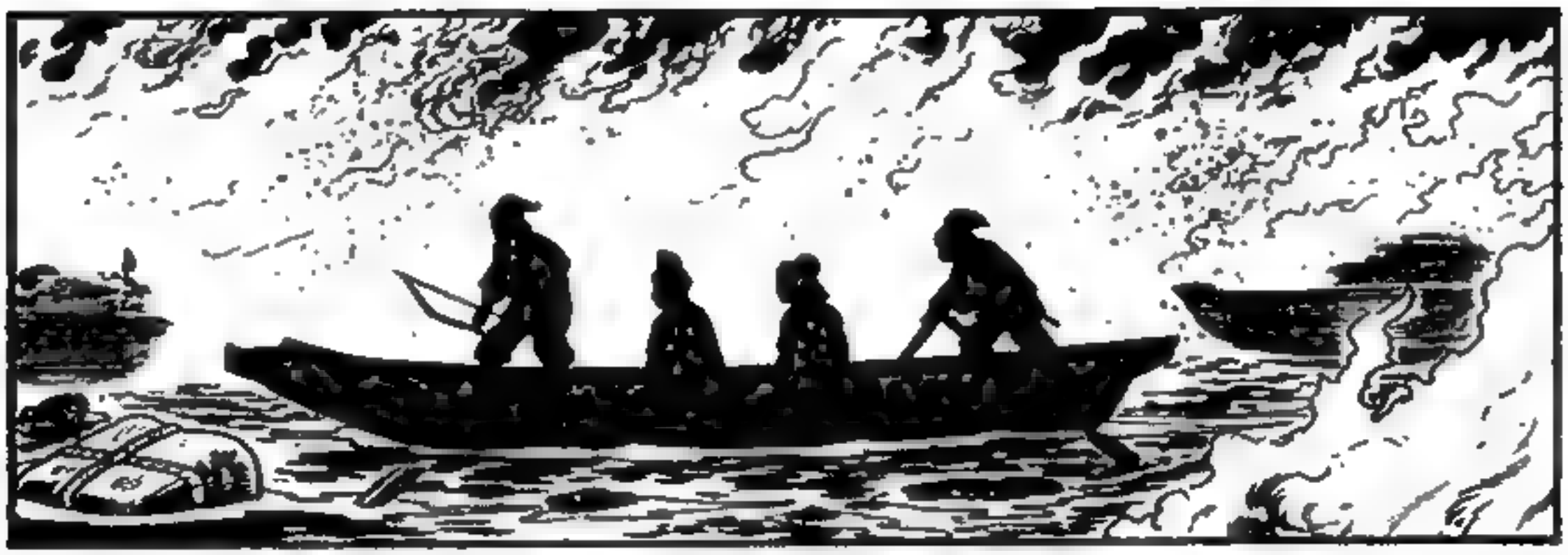
AHHHH!
GAHHHH!

FEEDING OFF
THE WIND, THE
FIRE SPREAD
RAPIDLY

THE ENTIRE BAY HAD TRANSFORMED INTO HELL ON EARTH.

THE FLAMES
THEN SPREAD
ONTO WEI'S
ENCAMPMENTS
ON LAND
FROM
THERE,
IT THEN
SPREAD
TO THE
FOREST


BOTH LAND AND
WATER WERE MADE
INDISTINGUISHABLE
BY THE
EVER-ENGULFING
FLAMES.

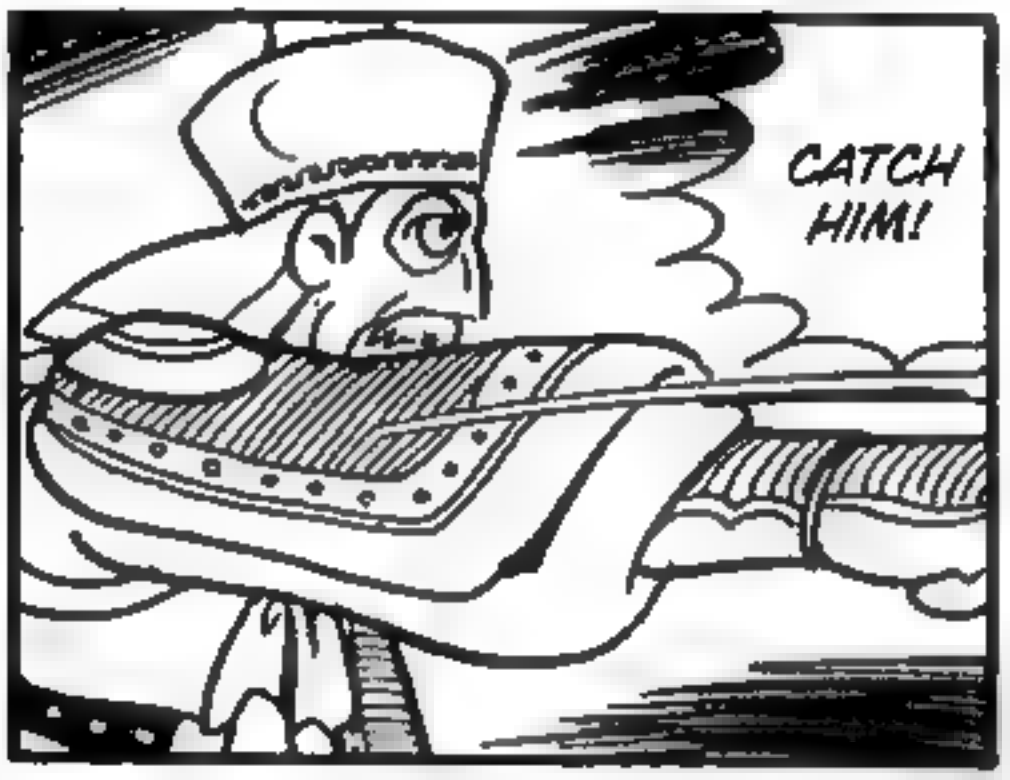


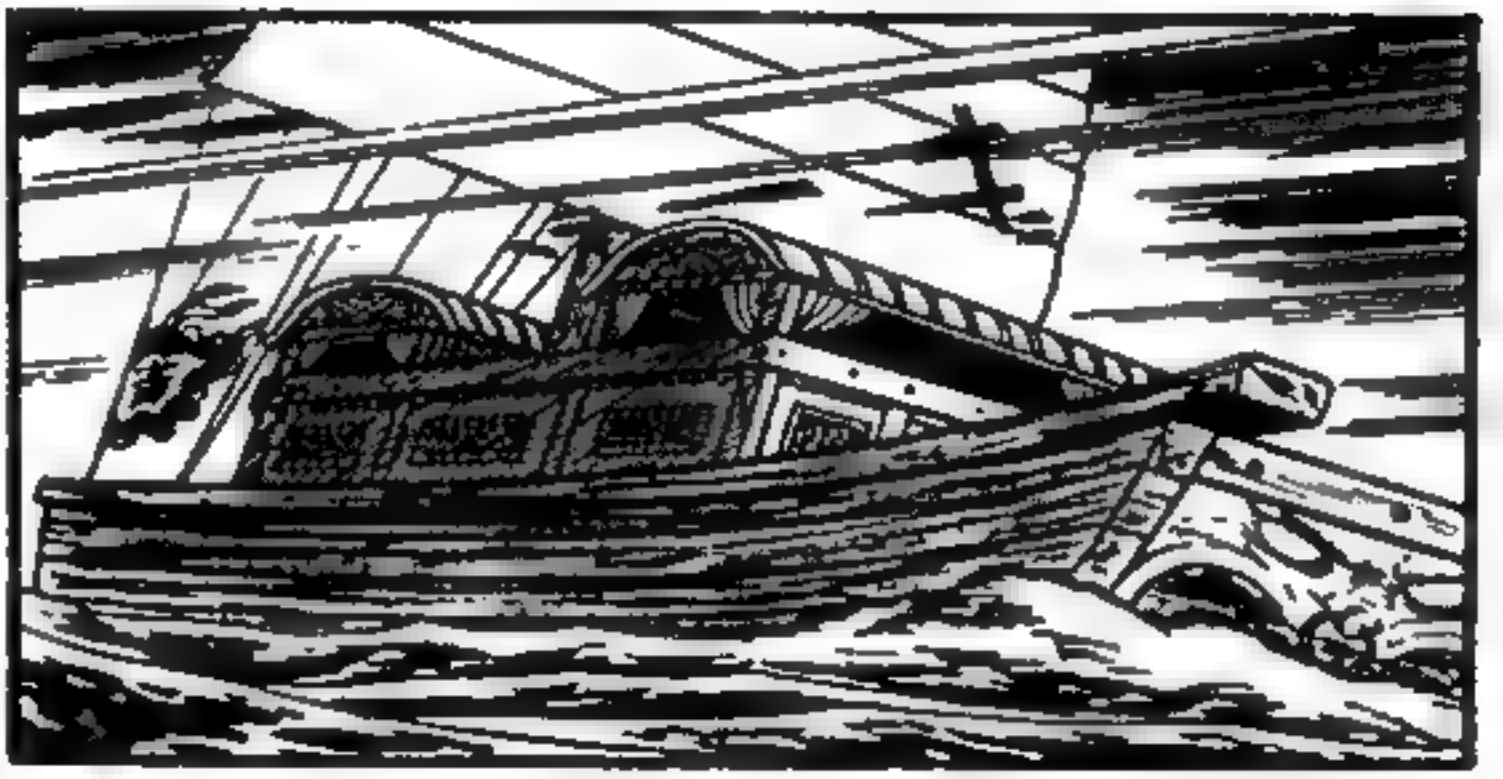
THERE MUST BE SOMEWHERE WE CAN LAND! KEEP ON SEARCHING, MEN!

NO GOOD, THIS PLACE IS COVERED BY FLAMES TOO...!

HM?
...

ISN'T THAT
CAO CAO!?


CATCH
HIM!



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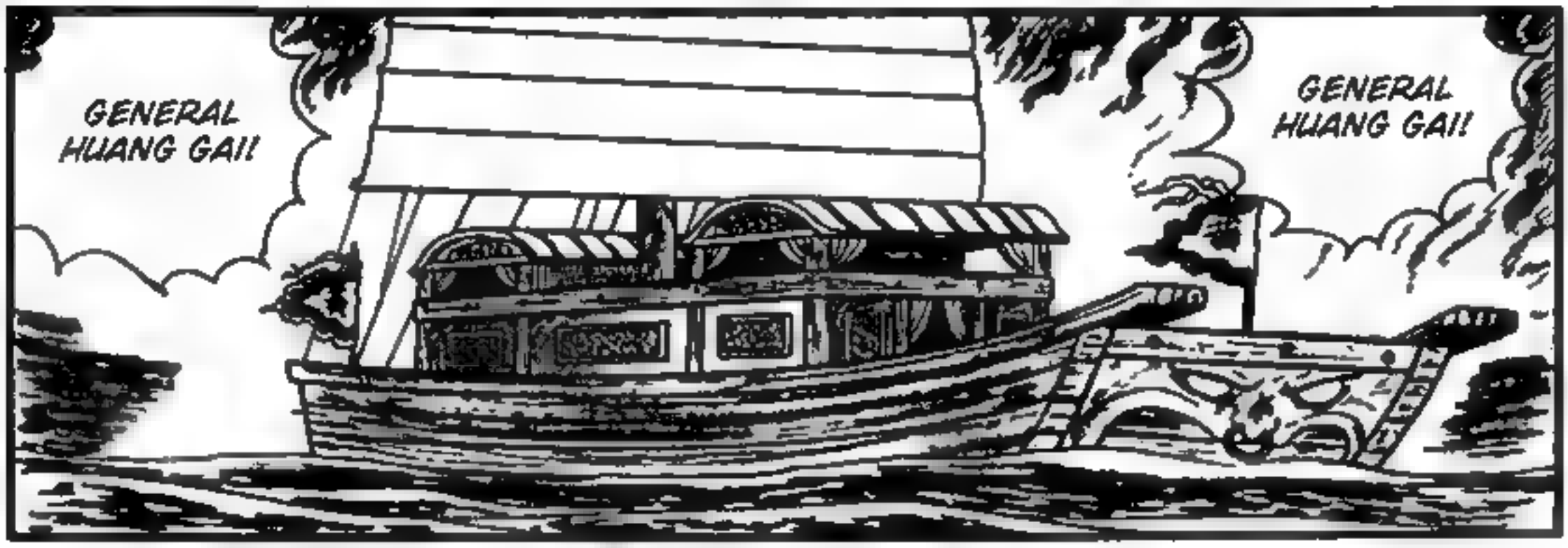
KNOW YOUR PLACE, SCUM!

GENERAL!
AHH!

AGH!


GENERAL HUANG GAI!
GENERAL HUANG GAI!

NOW'S OUR CHANCE! ROW AS FAST AS YOU CAN!

AH! I SEE A PLACE WHERE WE CAN DOCK, SIR!

IS THIS... IS THIS REALLY WHAT'S LEFT OF MY MAGNIFICENT FLEET!? IS THIS REALLY WHAT'S LEFT OF MY PROUD FORCES WHO ONCE STRUCK FEAR INTO THEIR ENEMIES' HEARTS...!?

THE SCENE THAT CAO CAO BEHELD WAS NOTHING BUT FIRE. HIS SHIPS AND ENCAMPMENTS HAD LONG BEEN BURNT DOWN, BUT THE FIRE REFUSED TO STOP, EVER-GROWING WITH THE SOUTHEAST WINDS. OVER 30,000 OF CAO CAO'S SOLDIERS DROWNED OR SUCCUMBED TO THESE FLAMES ALONE.

IT IS THIS DECISIVE BATTLE THAT IS REMEMBERED IN HISTORY AS THE "BATTLE OF RED CLIFFS."

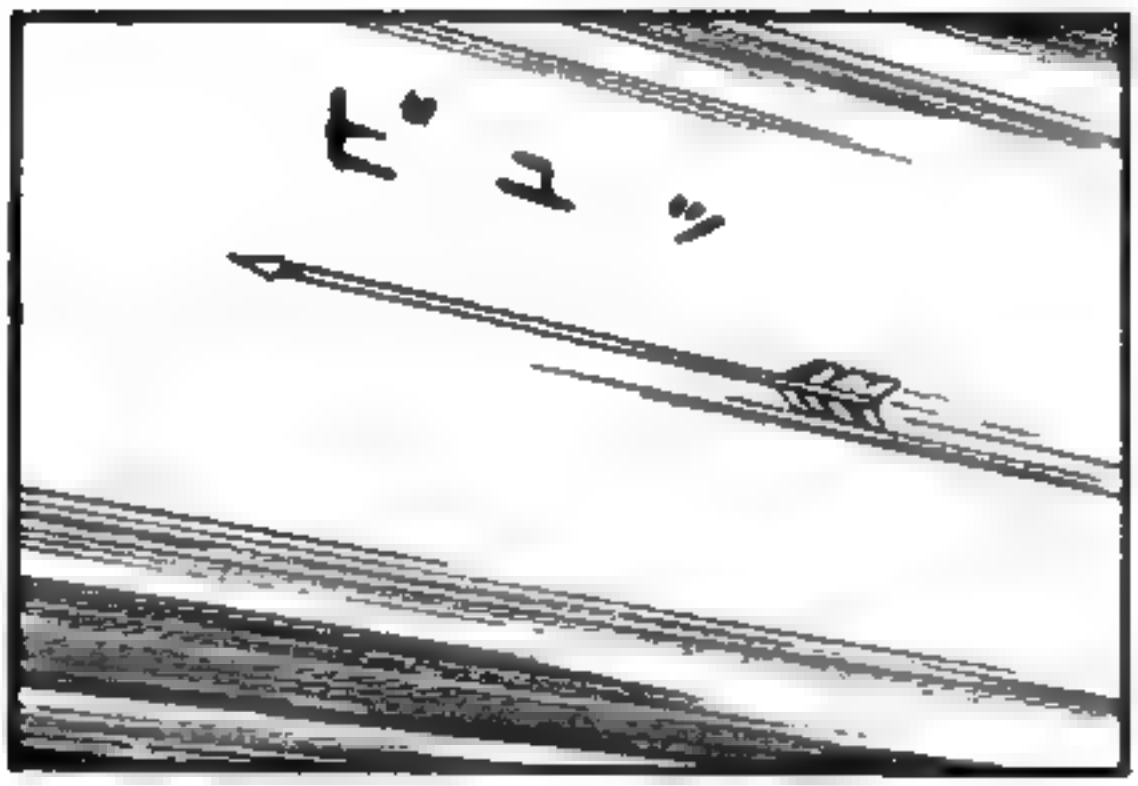
ENDLESS RETREAT

NOW LET US DO THE SAME TO HIS FORCES ON LAND!

LOOK HOW EASILY CAO CAO'S FLEET BURNS!

IT'S AN ENEMY RAID!

AHH!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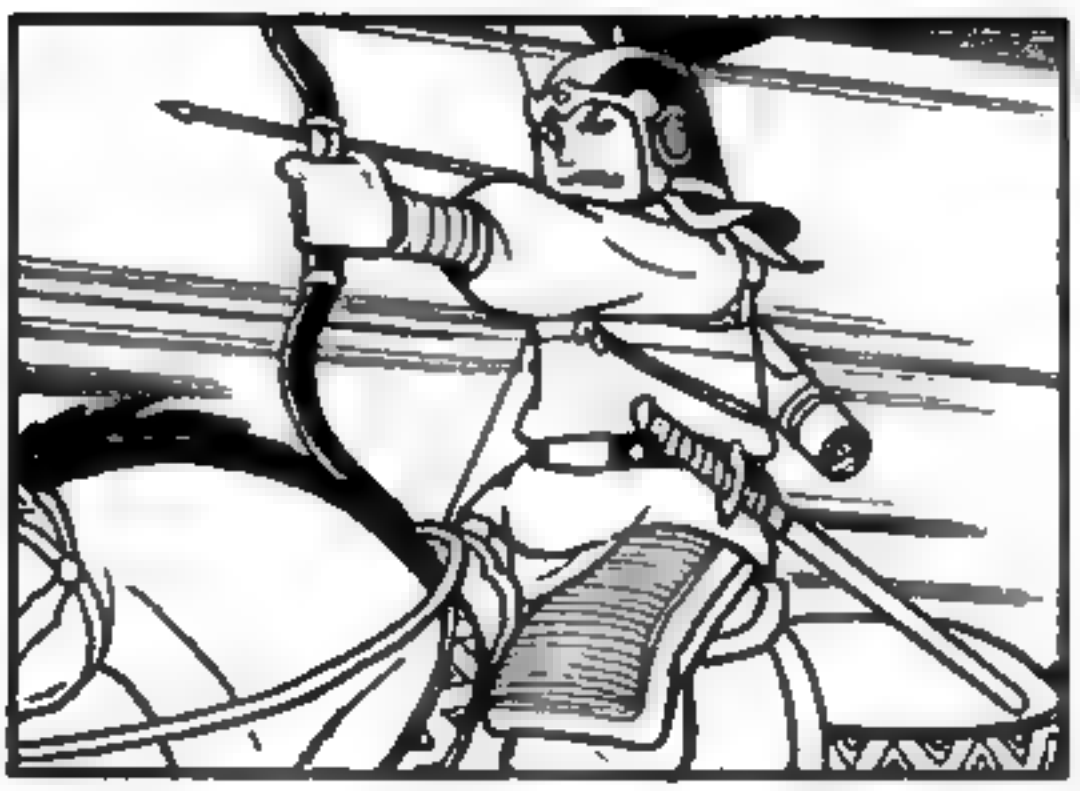

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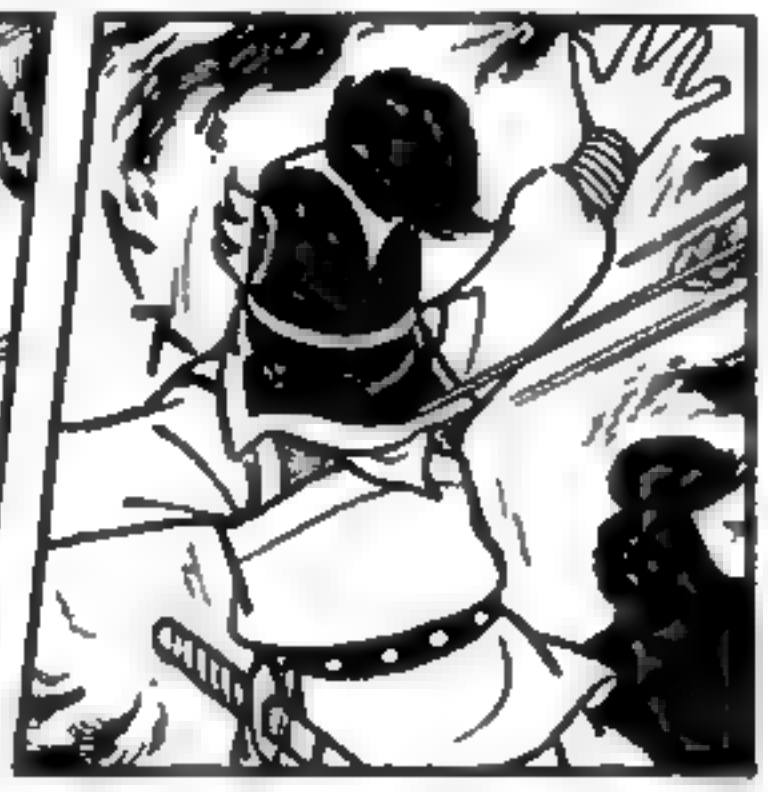

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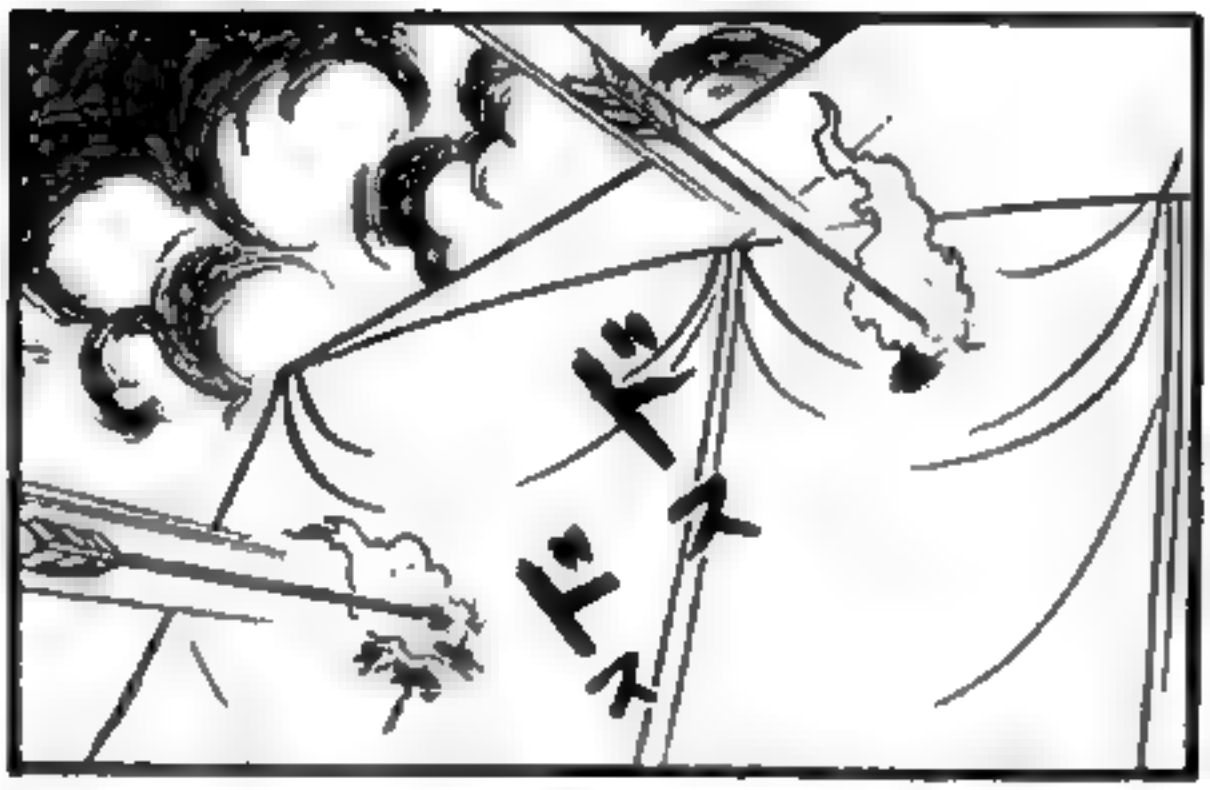
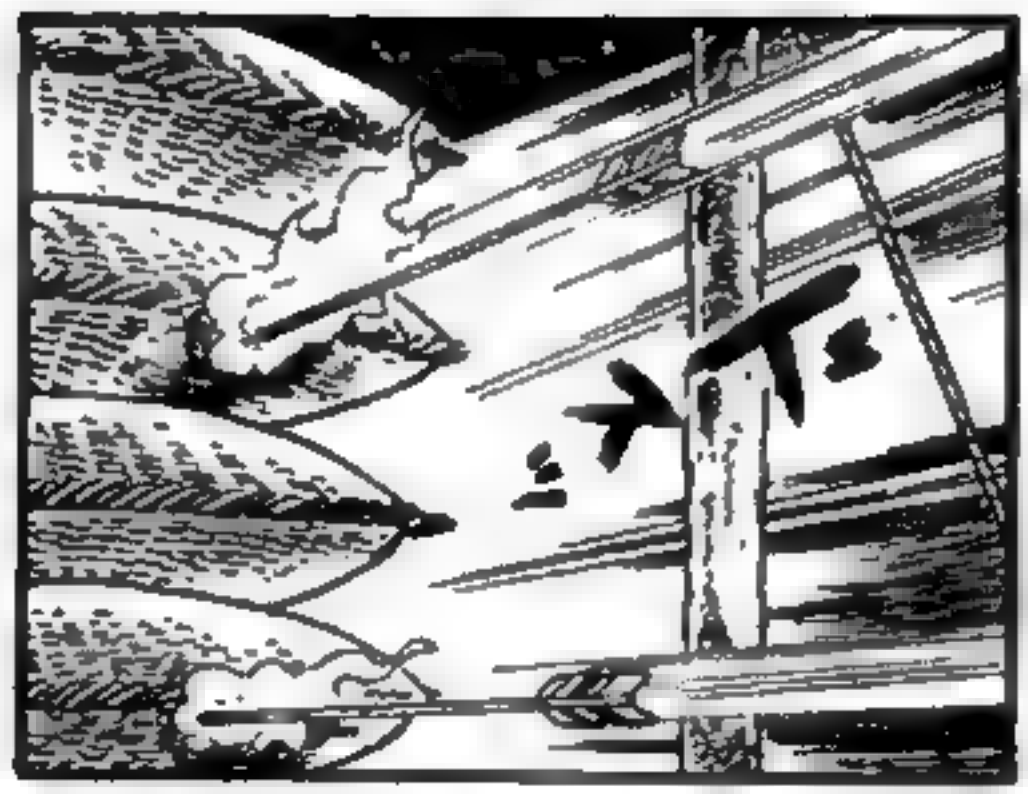
BURN EVERYTHING DOWN TO THE GROUND!





YES.
IT SEEMS THERE ARE ENEMY FORCES ATTACKING OUR BASE AHEAD. IT WOULD BE BEST TO RETREAT ALONG ANOTHER PATH, CHANCELLOR.

AH!

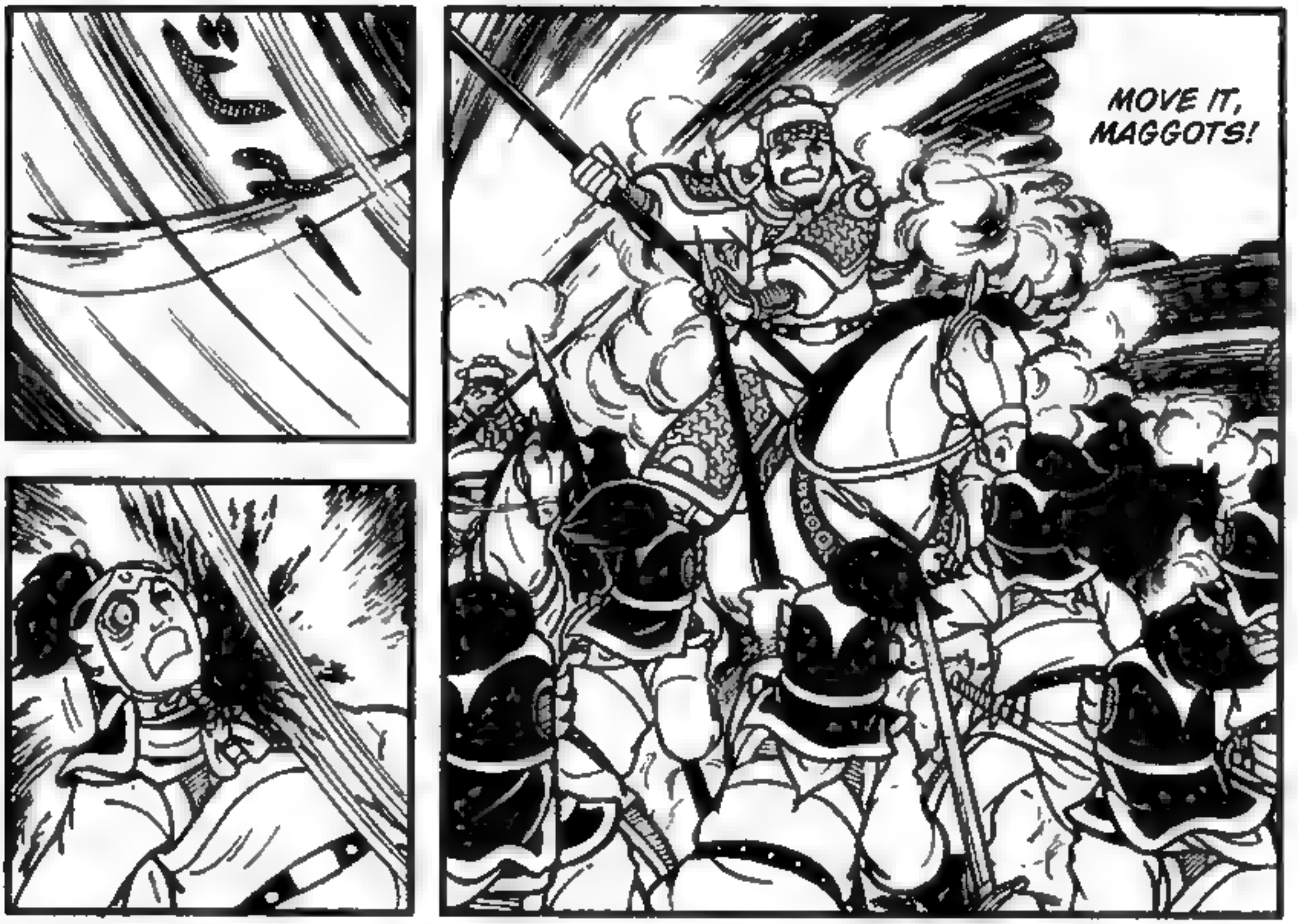
AH-

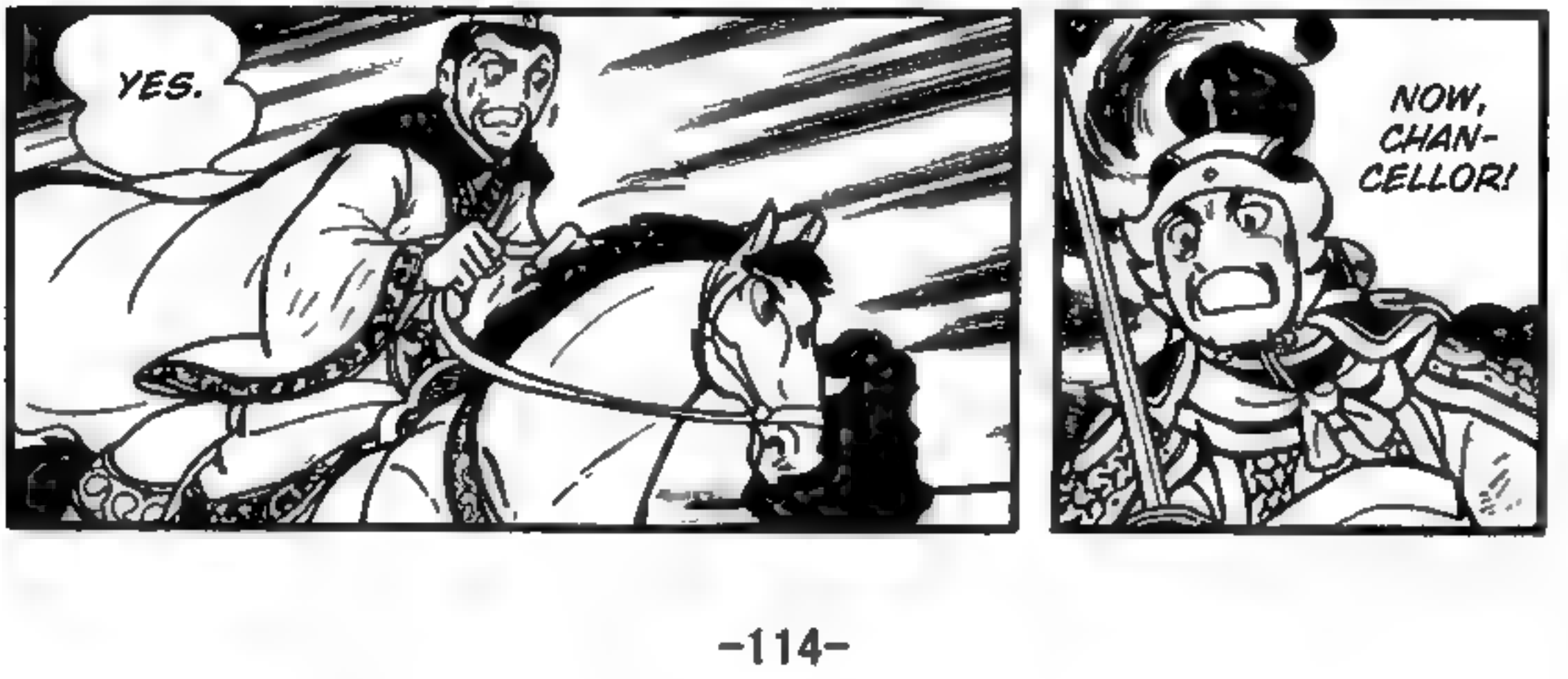
I AM GAN NING OF WU! TAKE MY BLADE LIKE A MAN!

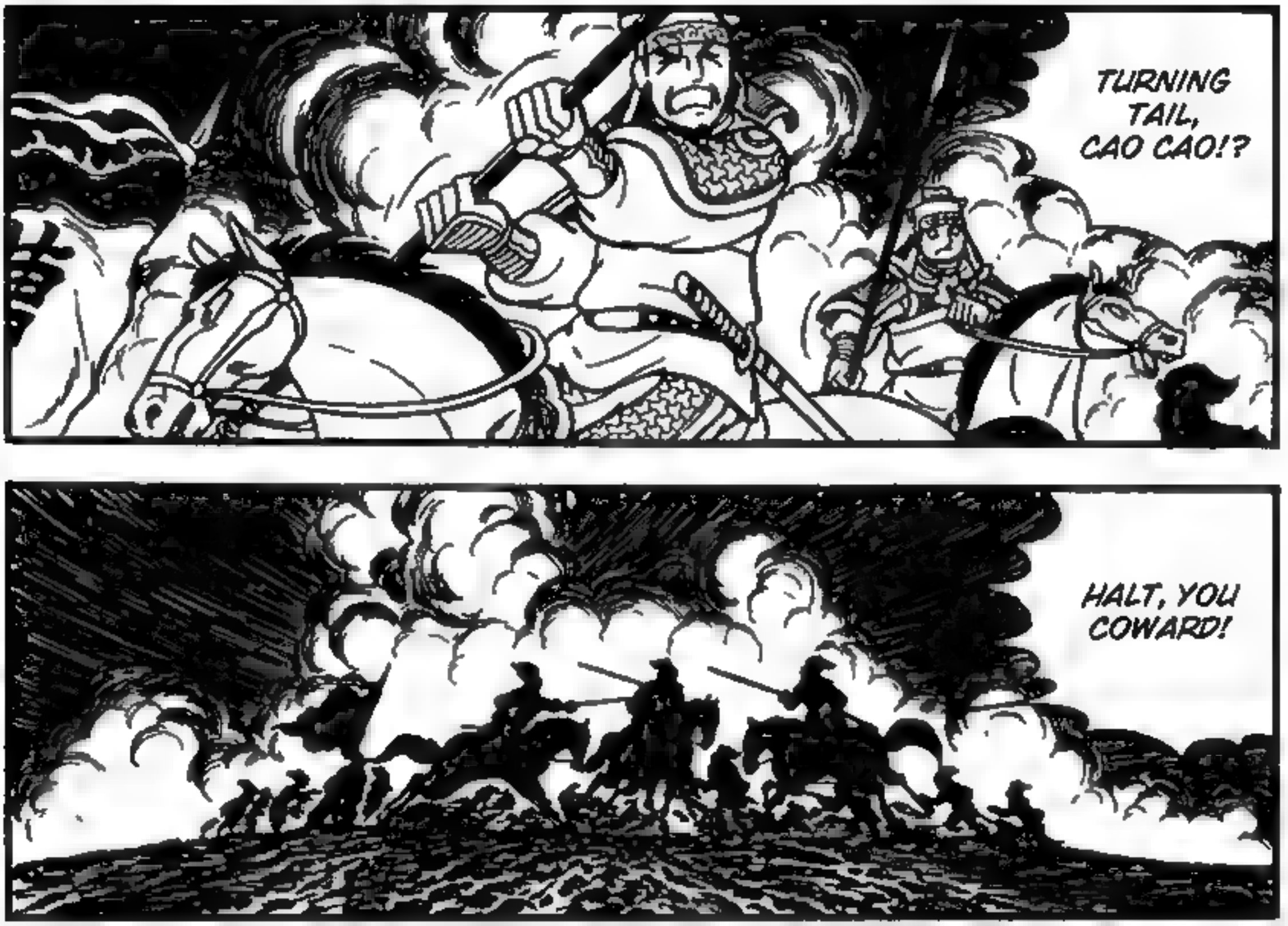
I WON'T LET YOU ESCAPE SO EASILY, CAO CAO!

PROTECT THE CHAN-CELLOR!

AGHH!


MOVE IT, MAGGOTS!


YES.
NOW, CHAN-CELLOR!


TURNING TAIL, CAO CAO!?
HALT, YOU COWARD!

HUFF
HUFF...
WE ARE WEST OF WULIN AND A LITTLE NORTH OF YIDU.
LOOKS LIKE WE'VE LOST THEM BUT WHERE ARE WE RIGHT NOW?

HMM?

SO WE'VE COME THIS FAR OUT ALREADY...

?
AHAHA HAHAHA!

HAHA...

OH, IT'S JUST THAT I COULDN'T HELP BUT THINK EVEN THE GREAT KONGMING OR ZHOU YU ARE ACTUALLY NOT ALL THAT GREAT AFTER ALL.

曹

WHAT IS SO AMUSING, CHAN-CELLOR?

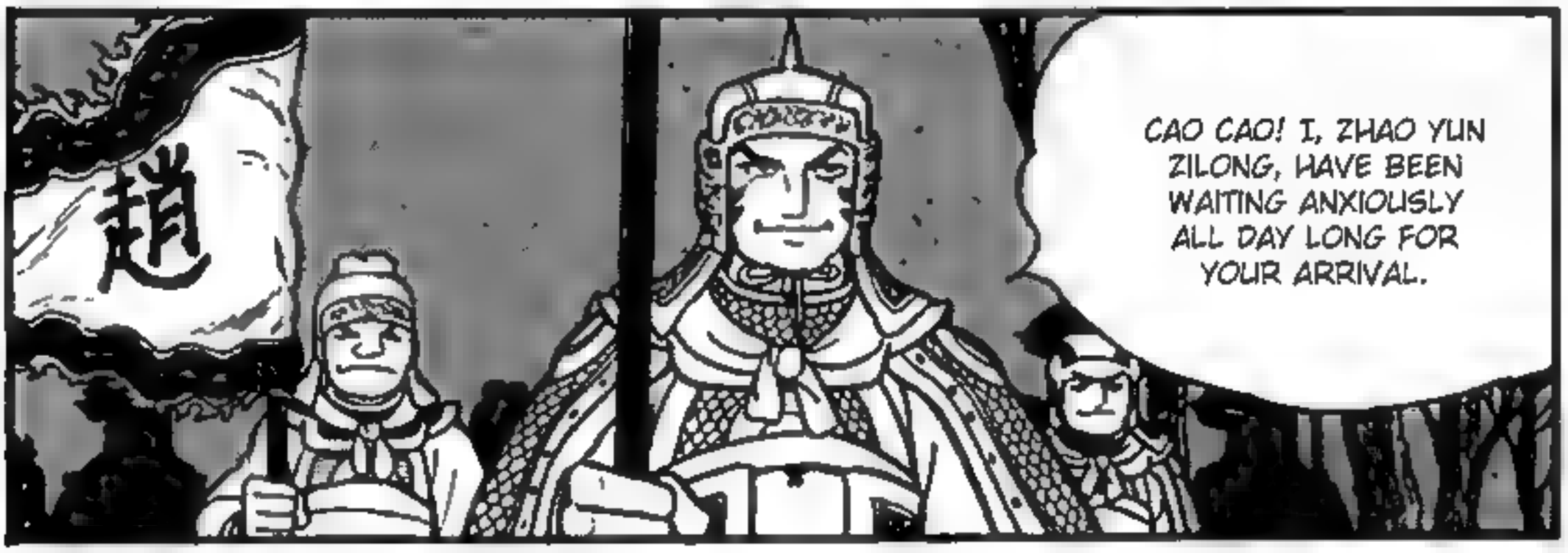
LOOK HOW IDEAL THIS TERRAIN IS FOR AN AMBUSH. IF I WERE KONGMING OR ZHOU YU, I WOULD HAVE SURELY SET UP AN AMBUSH HERE TO ANNHILATE THE ENEMY.

WHAT DOES SIR MEAN BY THAT...?

AHH!?

I SEE.

IF THE ENEMIES ARE CARELESS ENOUGH TO MAKE SUCH A MISTAKE, THEN THEIR SURPRISE VICTORY AT RED CLIFFS WAS BUT A MERE COINCIDENCE. THEY WILL NEVER HOPE TO BEAT ME AGAIN.


趙
CAO CAO! I, ZHAO YUN ZILONG, HAVE BEEN WAITING ANXIOUSLY ALL DAY LONG FOR YOUR ARRIVAL.

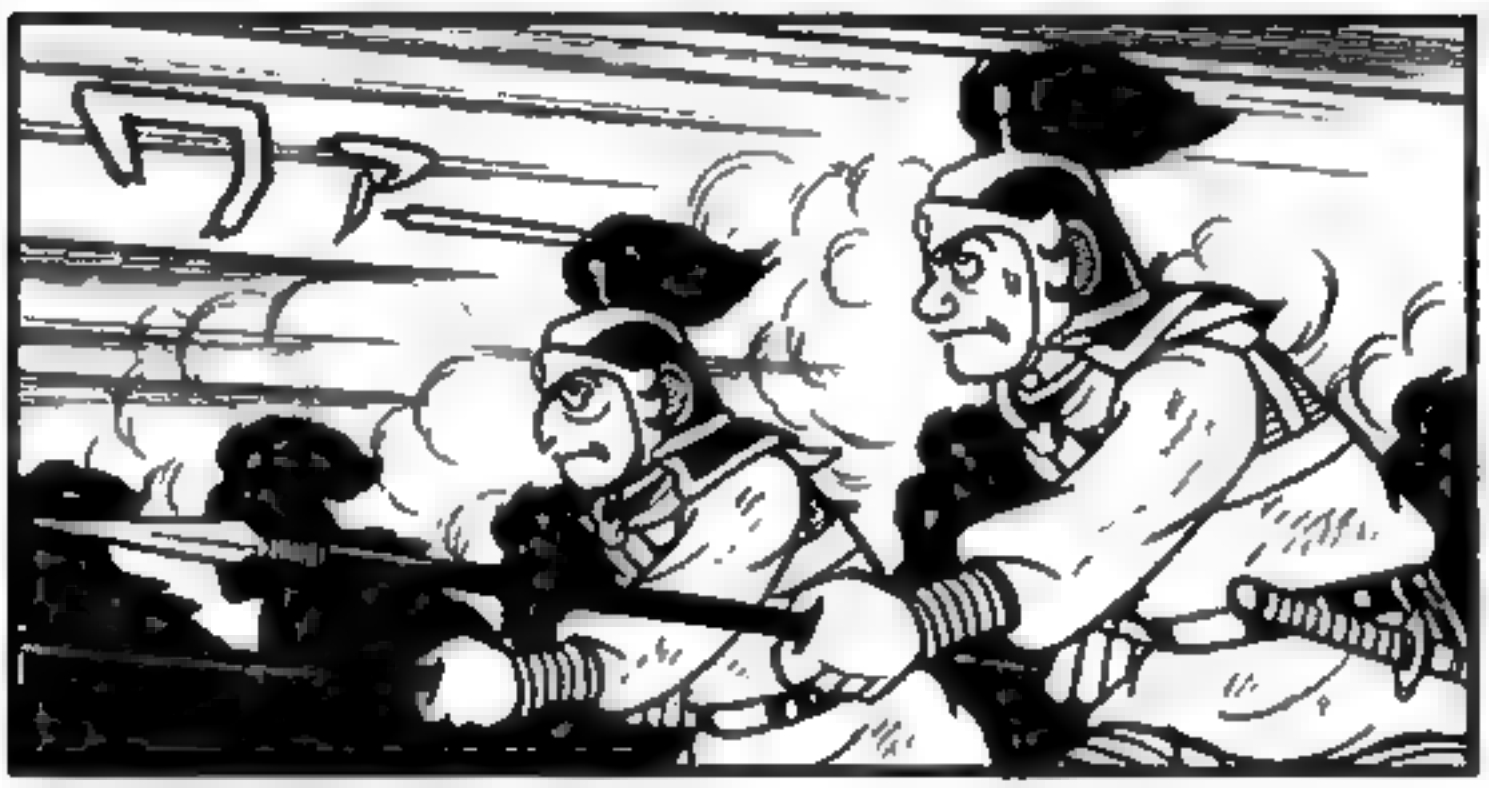
ALLOW ME TO GIVE YOU A WORTHY GREETING WITH MY SPEAR!
7
ZHAO ZILONG!? THE SAME MAN WHO SINGLE-HANDEDLY PENETRATED THROUGH MY LINES AT CHANGBAN!?

I SHALL HOLD THEM OFF HERE SO PLEASE ESCAPE, CHANCELLOR!

AGHH!

BLOCK THE ENEMIES!

I WON'T LET YOU ESCAPE!

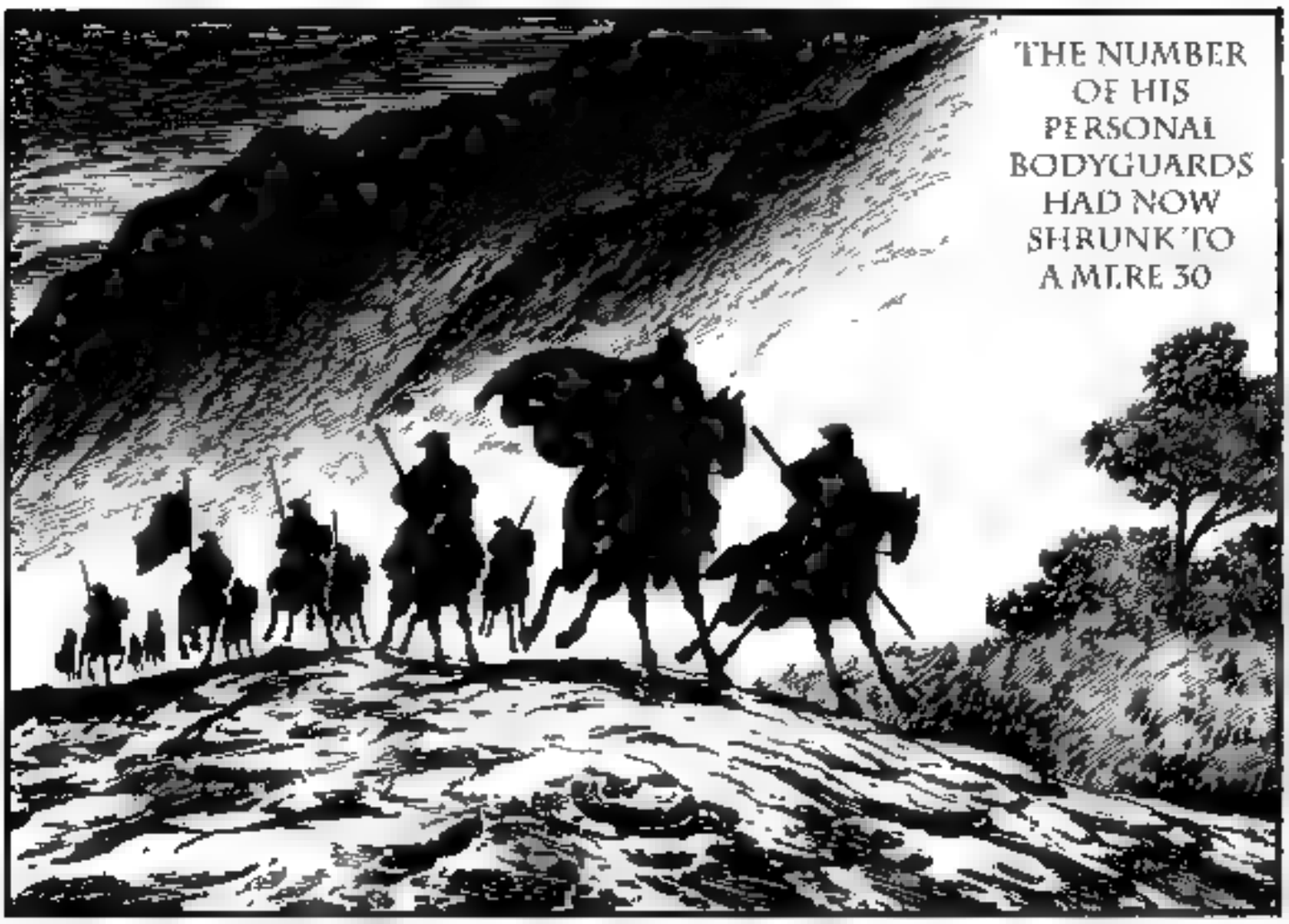


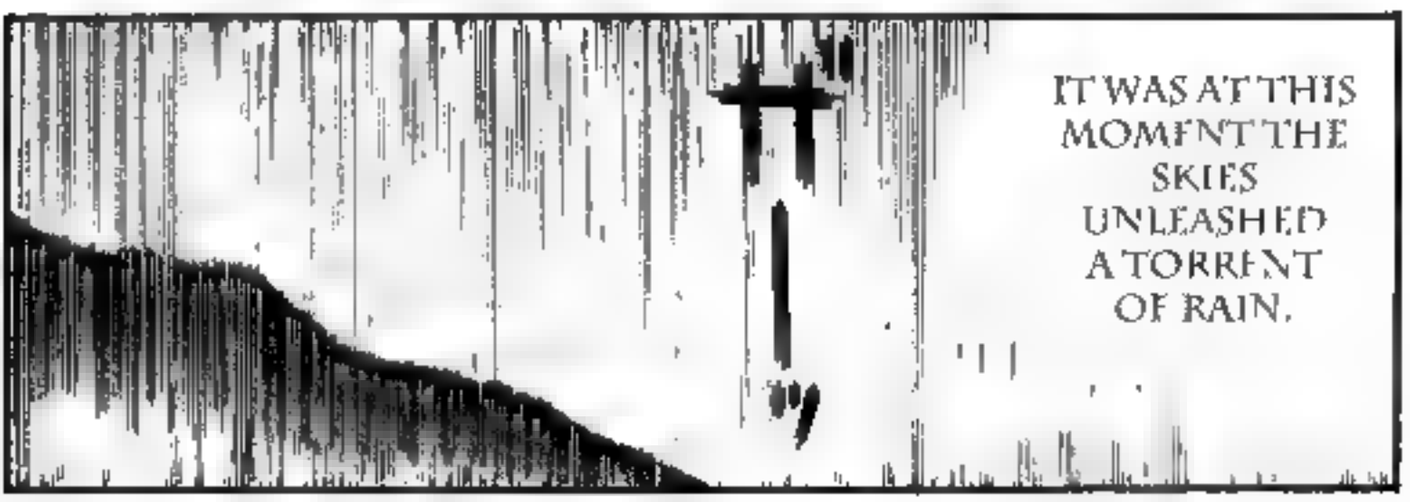
MOVE IT!

CONSIDER YOUR LIVES FORFEIT IF YOU TRY TO HINDER MY PATH!

CAO CAO S REMAINING FORCES ONCE AGAIN SUSTAINED A CRITICAL AMOUNT OF CASUALTIES.

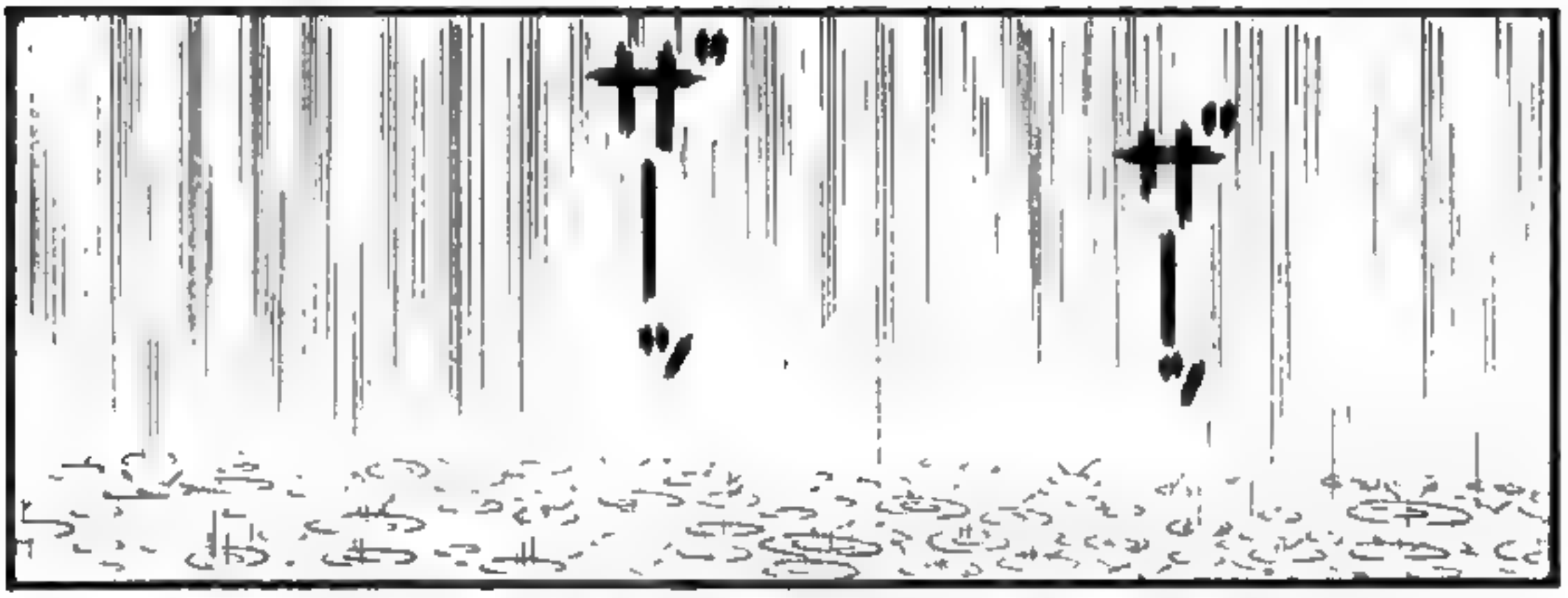
MEANWHILE, CAO CAO ABSENTMINDEDLY TOOK FLIGHT


THE NUMBER OF HIS PERSONAL BODYGUARDS HAD NOW SHRUNK TO A MERE 30


IT WAS AT THIS MOMENT THE SKIES UNLEASHED A TORRENT OF RAIN.

THE COLD WINTER RAIN SOAKED EVERY INCH OF THEIR BODIES.
FATIGUE WAS NOW THEIR NEW RELENTLESS PURSUER

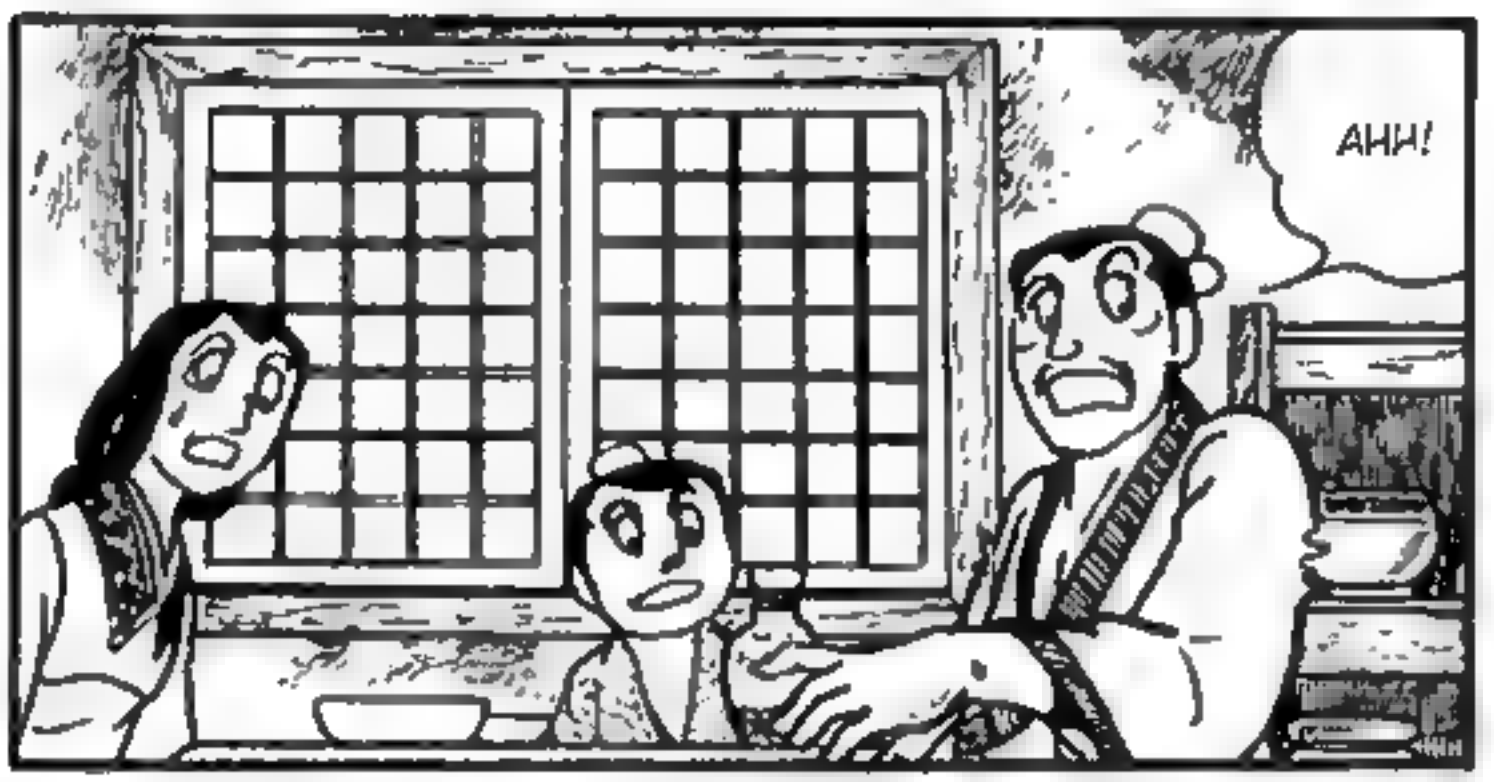
SMOKE



YES, SIR.
WE BETTER STOCK UP ON FOOD HERE WHILE WE CAN THEN.
OHH!

GO COLLECT ANY FOOD YOU CAN FIND!

AS PER THE CHAN-CE..OR OF HAN'S ORDERS,


AHH!

CARRY OUT THE FOOD.

Y-YES, SIRS...
WE SHALL HEREBY CONFISCATE ANY FOOD YOU HAVE. ANYONE WHO RES'STS SHALL BE EXECUTED. I SHALL NOT REPEAT THIS A SECOND TIME

WE'LL BE DEPARTING AS SOON AS THE GRAINS HAVE ALL BEEN LOADED ON THE HORSES.

GOOD.

WE'VE FINISHED LOADING ALL THE FOOD, CHANCELLOR.

カッカッカッ

THEN LET'S QUICKLY DEPART

AHH!

RETREAT! RETREAT!

ENEMIES!

ACK!

THAT VOICE...

WHAT?

WAIT! WE'RE ON YOUR SIDE!
ドドド

CHAN-
CELLOR!

AH, IF IT
ISN'T XU
CHU AND
LI DIAN!

THANK THE
HEAVENS SIR
IS STILL ALIVE
AND WELL.

DO YOU
KNOW THE
STATUS OF
OUR
OTHER
FORCES?

THE SAME
TO YOU.

HMM...

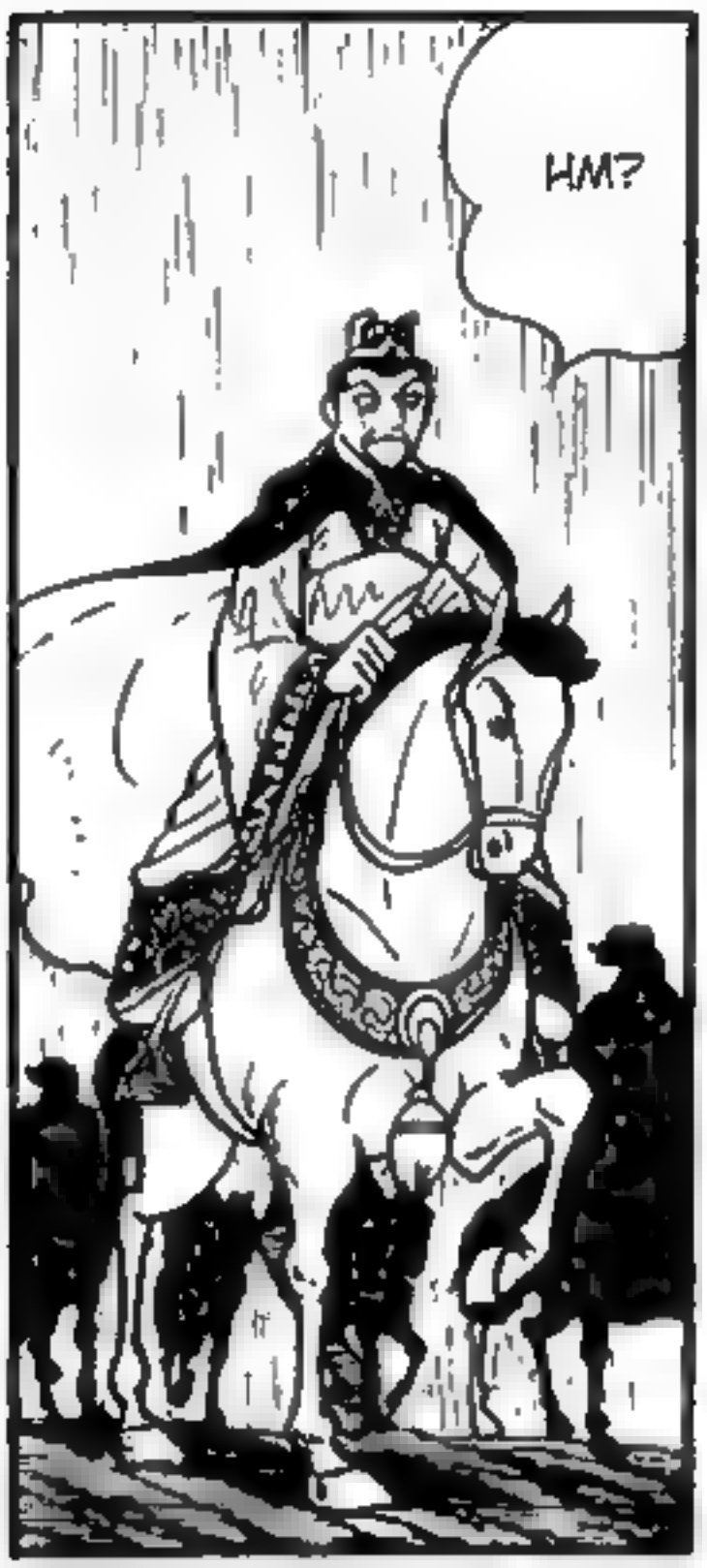
I'M AFRAID THE FIRE AND ENEMY AMBUSHES HAVE SPLIT OUR FORCES APART, MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE TO ASCERTAIN THEIR STATUSES.

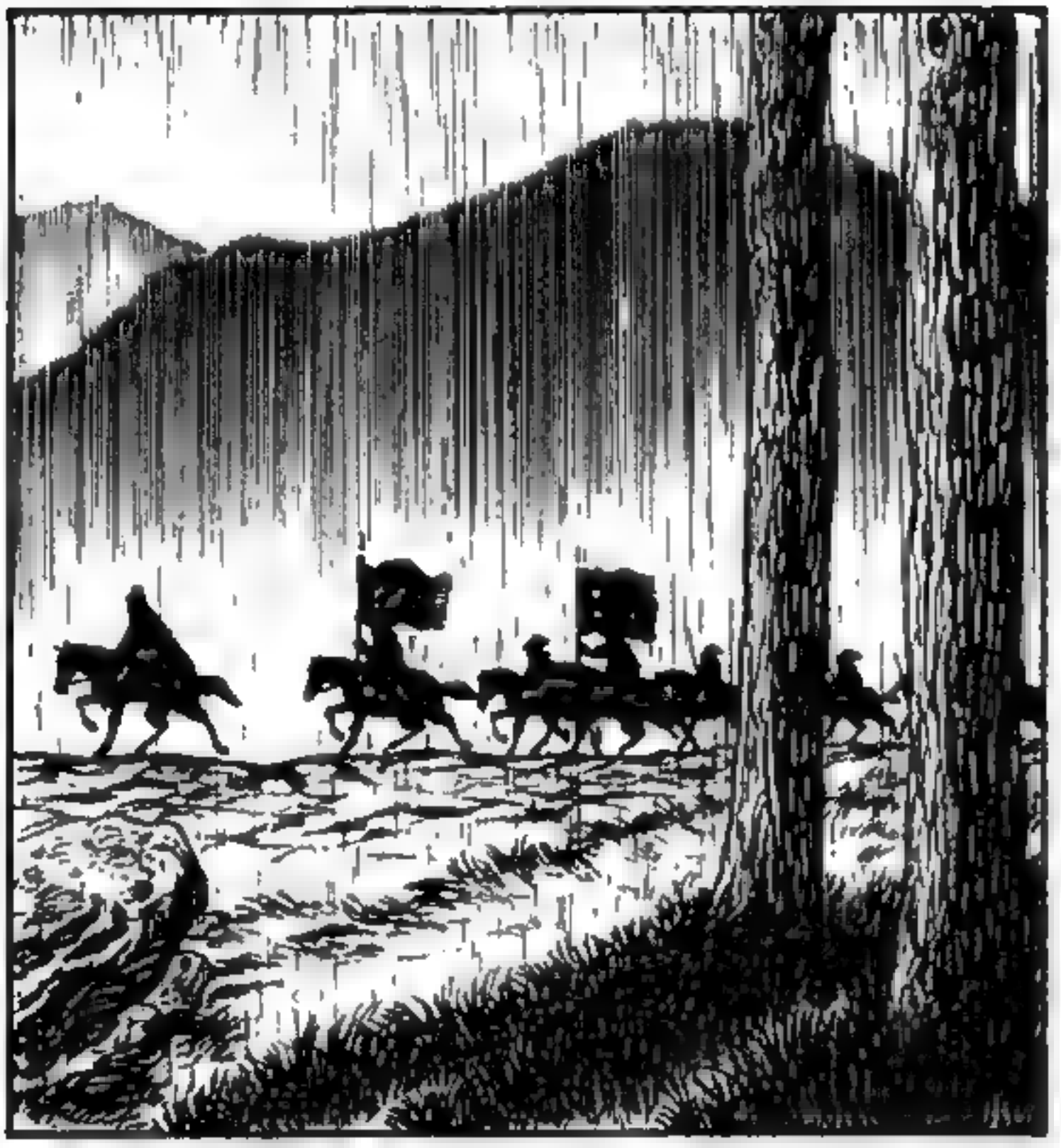
I SEE...

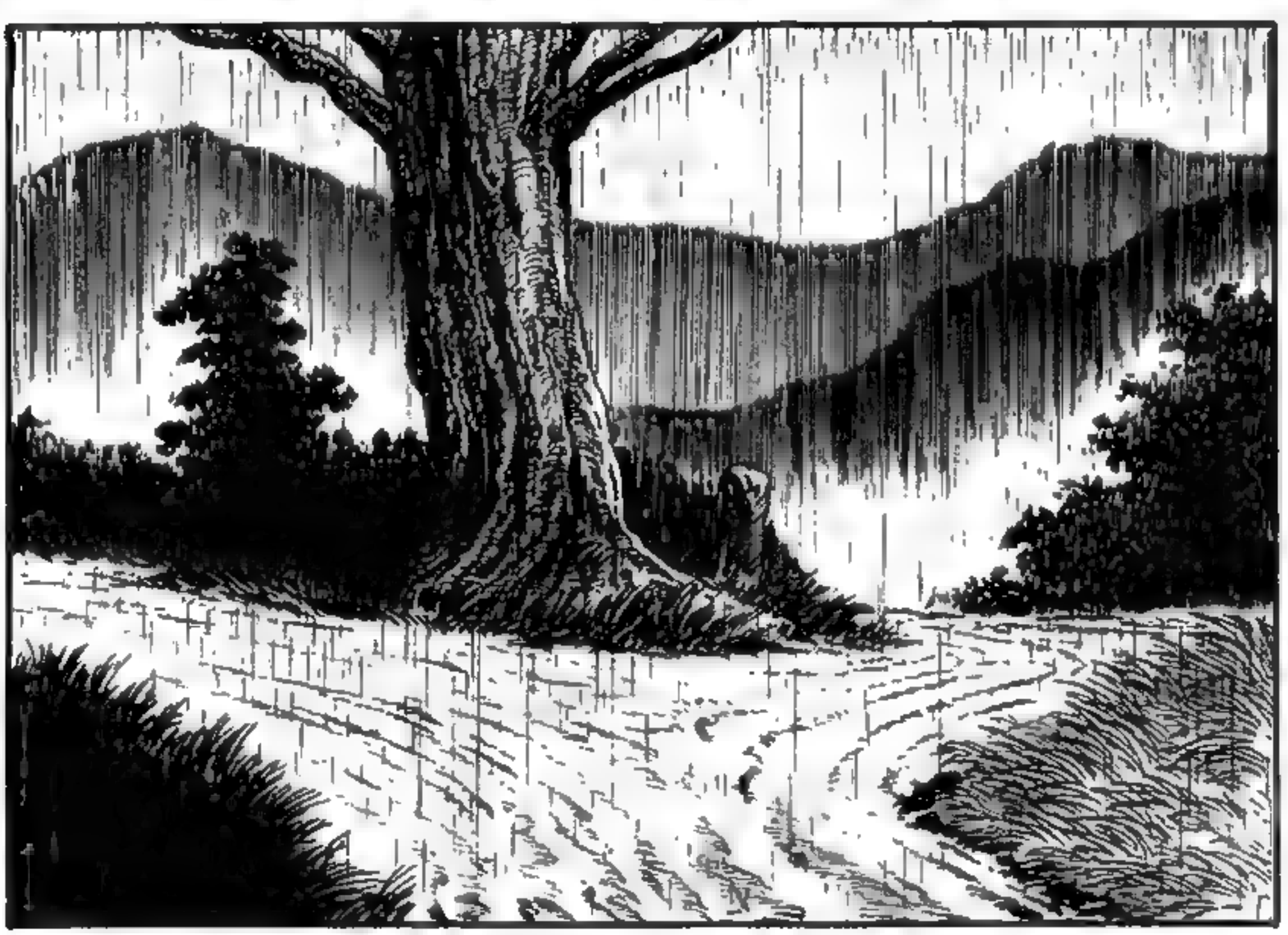
EVEN WE JUST BARELY MANAGED TO ESCAPE HERE WITH OUR LIVES INTACT.

LET US DEPART BEFORE THE ENEMIES CATCH UP AGAIN!

IF THAT'S HOW IT IS, THEN WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO REGROUP AT XUCHANG AS FAST AS POSSIBLE.


HM?





THIS WAY LEADS TO SOUTH YILING WHILE THE OTHER WAY IS A MOUNTAIN PATH TO NORTH YILING.

THE ROAD SEEMS TO SPLIT INTO TWO BUT WHICH WAY SHOULD WE TAKE...?

THAT WOULD BE GOING TO SOUTH YILING AND CROSSING THE HULU VALLEY.

WHICH WAY IS FASTEST TO XUCHANG?

ALRIGHT, TO SOUTH YILING THEN!

PANT
PANT

HUFF
HUFF

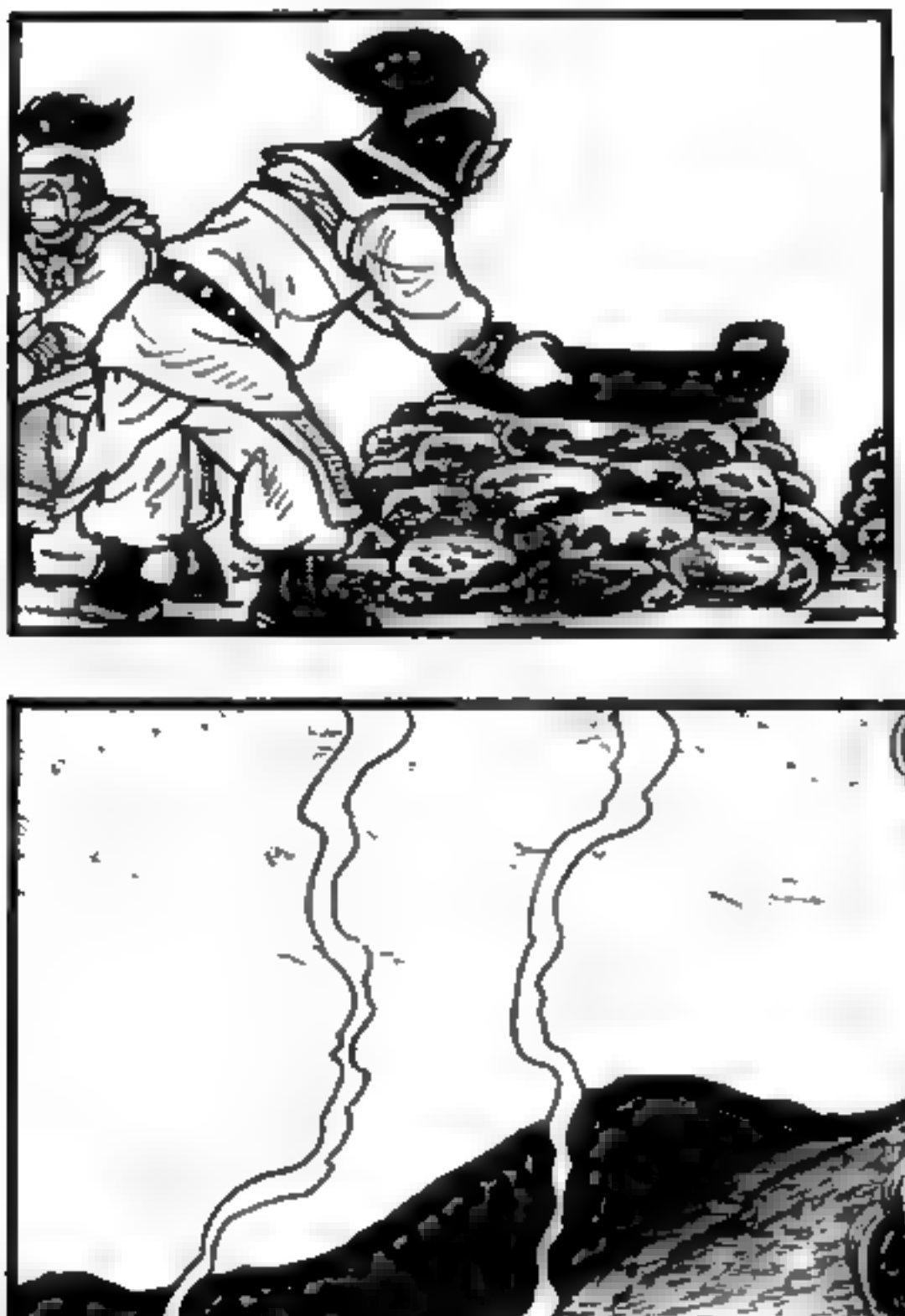
IT SEEMS BOTH THE MEN AND THE HORSES HAVE REACHED THEIR LIMITS.

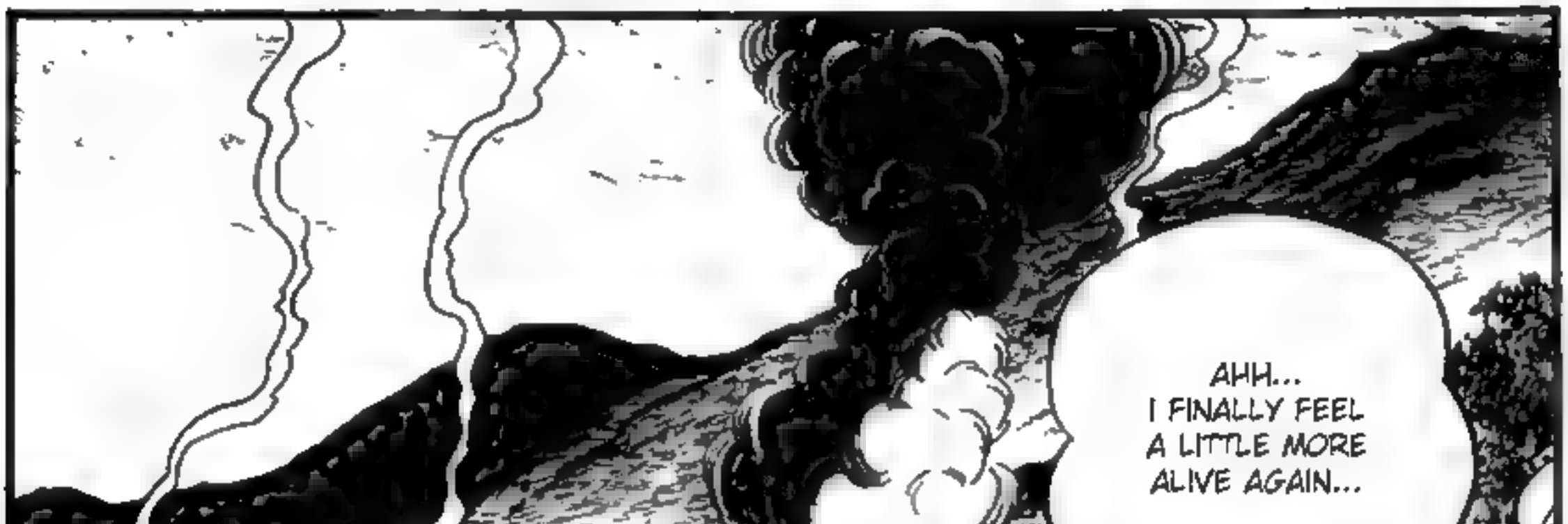
START UP THE FIRES SO WE CAN COOK AND DRY OUR WET CLOTHES.

YES, SIR.

LET US TAKE A BRIEF RESPITE HERE AND EAT.

!!




AHH...
I FINALLY FEEL
A LITTLE MORE
ALIVE AGAIN...

HUH?

AHH!

GREAT TO SEE YOU'VE FINALLY COME, CAO CAO! I WAS GETTING WORRIED THAT SOMEONE ELSE ALREADY TOOK THE GLORY OF CUTTING YOU DOWN.

ZHANG FEI!?

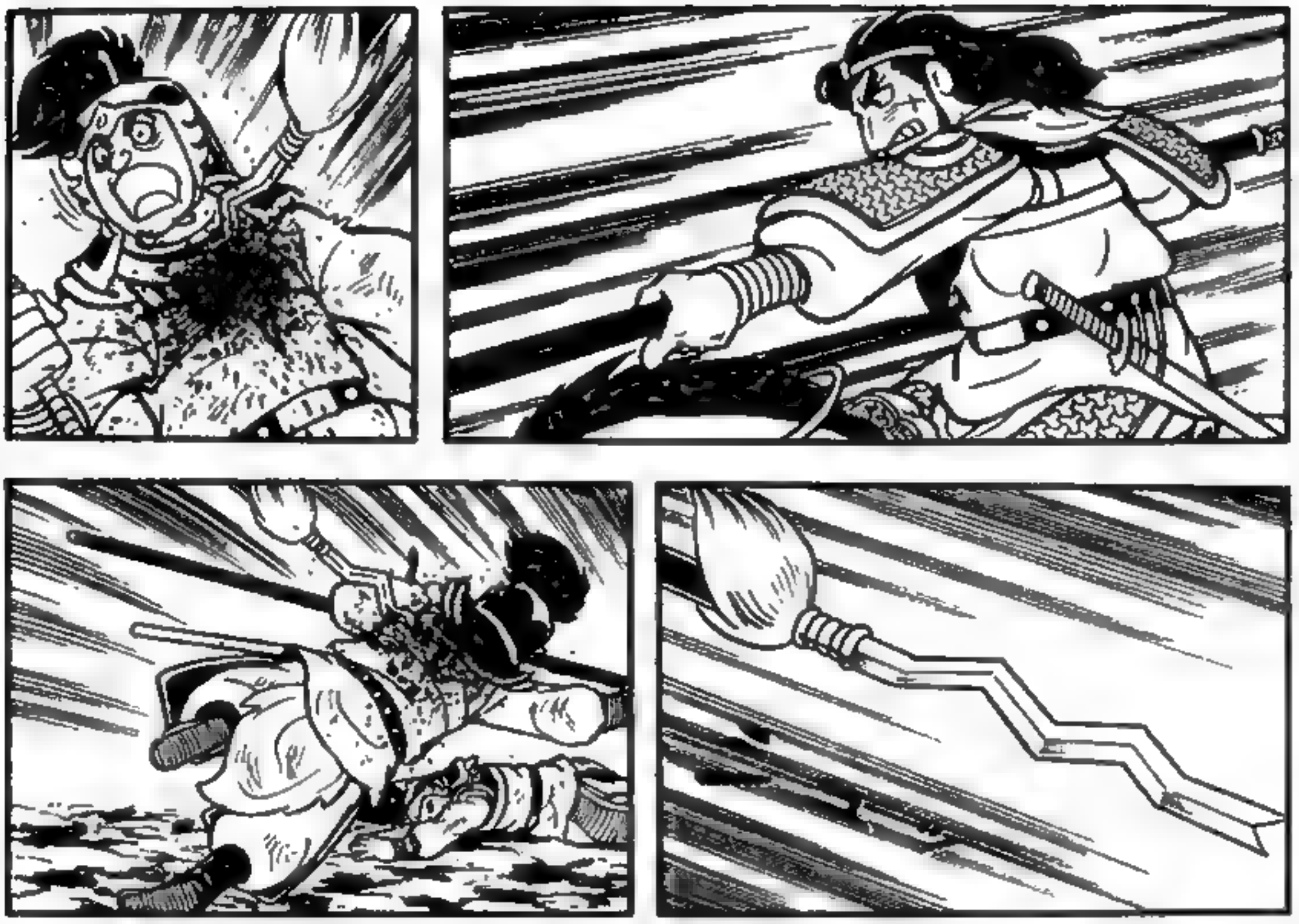
I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND THIS OLD ZHANG FEI TAKING THAT GLORY FOR HIMSELF!

AGHH!

PROTECT THE CHAN-CELLOR!

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!

CLEAR THE WAY!



WHEN CAO CAO HEARD ZHANG FEI SPEAK HIS NAME, HE FELT AS IF HE WERE NO LONGER AMONG THE LIVING

CHANCE-
LLOR!

SHUTTING HIS EYES TIGHT, ALL HE COULD DO WAS CLUTCH THE REINS OF HIS HORSE AND PRAY IT WOULD TAKE HIM ELSEWHERE.

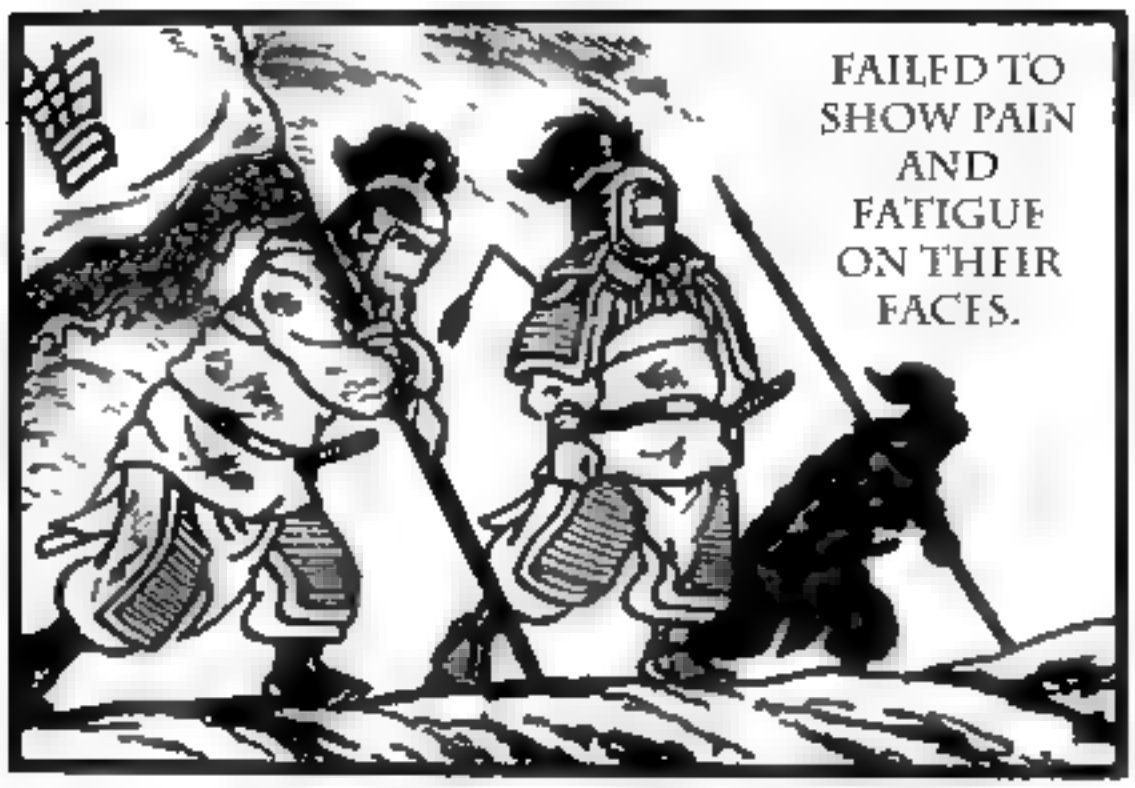
GOING TOO FAR AHEAD ALONE IS DANGEROUS.

YES, GOOD IDEA.

WE SHOULD MOMENTARILY WAIT HERE FOR THE REST OF THE TROOPS TO CATCH UP.

YES, CHANCELLOR.
I'M EXHAUSTED ENOUGH AS IT IS ALREADY. LET'S USE THIS TIME TO RECOVER OUR STRENGTHS AS WELL.

AFTER SOME TIME, THE BEATEN SOLDIERS GATHERED ONE BY ONE.


FAILED TO
SHOW PAIN
AND
FATIGUE
ON THEIR
FACES.

NOT A
SINGLE
SOLDIER.

AFTER GATHERING
HIS EXHAUSTED
SOLDIERS ON THE
VERGE OF COLLAPSE,
CAO CAO SET OUT
FOR XUCHANG
ONCE MORE.

IT WAS TRULY
AN ENDLESS
MARCH OF
THE
DEFEATED.

HUARONG VALLEY

HMM... IF POSSIBLE, TAKING THE SHORTER PATH WOULD BE BEST BUT...

BOTH ROADS LEAD TO THE SAME PLACE AND ONLY DIFFER IN TERMS OF DISTANCE. THE PATH THROUGH HUARONG VALLEY IS NARROW AND STEEP BUT IS OVER 50LI SHORTER THAN THE OTHER PATH.

YES, SIR.

SEND A COUPLE MEN TO SCOUT OUT THE PATH THROUGH HUARONG VALLEY.

曹

許

HUH?

THERE MUST BE AN ENEMY AMBUSH.

SMOKE?

DID YOU SPOT ANYTHING?

REPORTING, SIR!

WHAT!?

WE SPOTTED SEVERAL COLUMNS OF SMOKE RISING UP FROM THE VALLEY UP AHEAD.

HUARONG VALLEY SHOULD BE TOO NARROW AND STEEP TO ADEQUATELY HIDE ANY SOLDIERS.

HAHA... I BEG TO DIFFER.

THERE MUST BE ENEMIES PLANNING TO AMBUSH US IN HUARONG VALLEY, CHANCELLOR.

THE ENEMIES WOULD MOST LIKELY WISH TO PLACE AN AMBUSH ON THE OTHER PATH INSTEAD. THAT'S EXACTLY WHY THEY'RE PURPOSELY SHOWING US COLUMNS OF SMOKE. IT'S TO MAKE US THINK THERE'S AN ENEMY AMBUSH AND HEAD FOR THE OTHER PATH.

AS MILITARY TREATISES OFTEN STATE, IN WAR, YOU MUST CONCEAL TRUTH AS LIES AND LIES AS TRUTH.

AFTER ALL, KONGMING IS THE TYPE TO EXPLOIT HOW PEOPLE NORMALLY THINK.

I WON'T FALL FOR KONGMING'S PLOYS AGAIN! WE SHALL HEAD FOR HUARONG VALLEY!

HUFF HUFF

PANT PANT

HOWEVER, CROSSING THE VALLEY PROVED DIFFICULT FOR THE EXHAUSTED SOLDIERS

HM.

SNOW HAS BEGUN TO FALL, CHANCELLOR.

HM?

YES, IT'LL BE COLDER HIGHER UP THE VALLEY. TELL THE MEN TO HURRY UP.

WE'LL HAVE TO QUICKEN OUR PACE.

AH-

QUICKEN YOUR PACE, MEN!

AH!

TURN AROUND AND SEARCH FOR AN ALTERNATE PATH!

YESTERDAY'S HEAVY RAINFALL MUST HAVE CAUSED A LANDSLIDE, SIR.

AH!

I SHALL CHECK IF IT'S POSSIBLE TO CROSS IT.

THIS PATH IS BLOCKED BY A BOG, SIR.

EASY THERE...

ハーナブ ジャブ

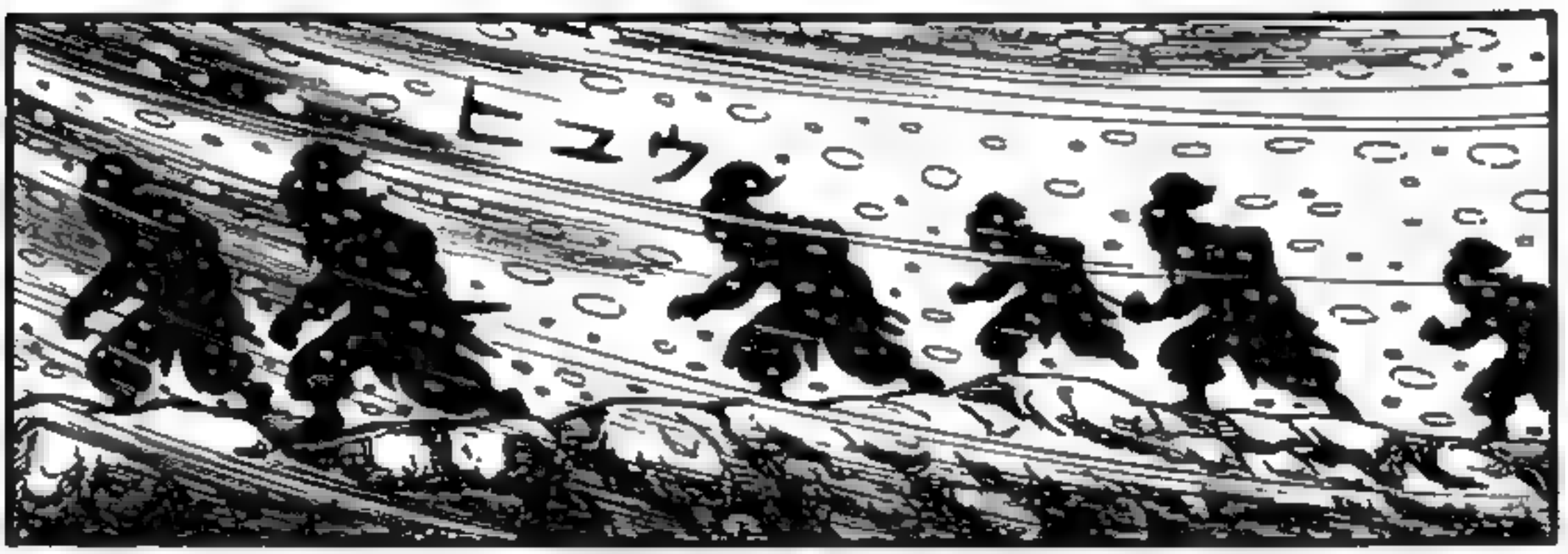
THEN WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO BUILD A MAKESHIFT BRIDGE.

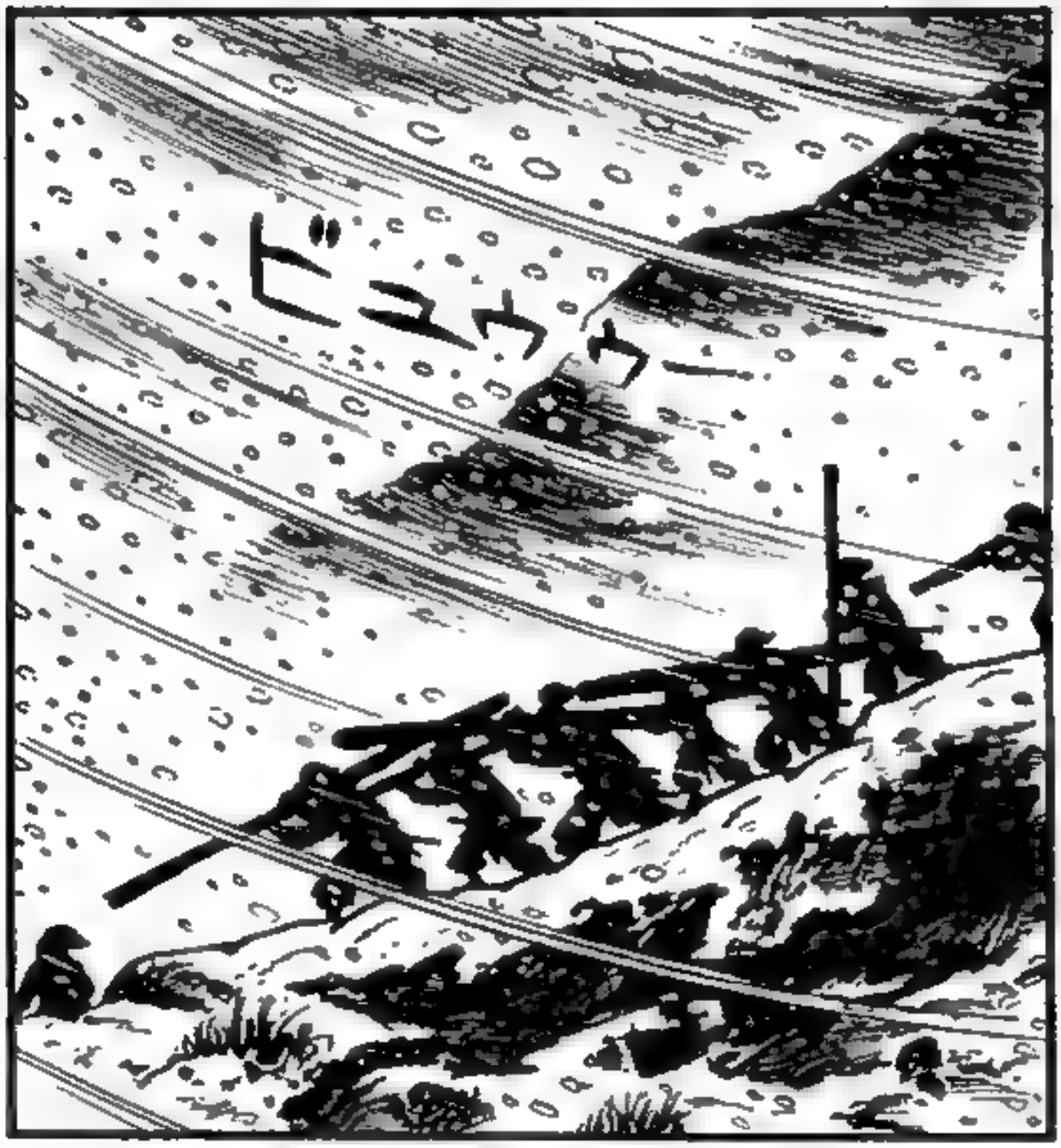
IT'S NO GOOD, CHANCELLOR. THE MUD IS TOO THICK AND DEEP FOR EVEN THE HORSES TO CROSS.

WELL!? WHAT'RE YOU ALL STANDING AROUND FOR!? WHEN A MOUNTAIN BLOCKS OUR PATH, WE CARVE A ROAD THROUGH IT! WHEN A RIVER BLOCKS OUR PATH, WE BUILD A BRIDGE OVER IT! THIS IS WAR, MEN, SO GET TO IT!

ANY WHO DISOBEYS ORDERS SHALL BE PROMPTLY EXECUTED!

IF YOU CAN STAND, START CUTTING DOWN THE TREES!





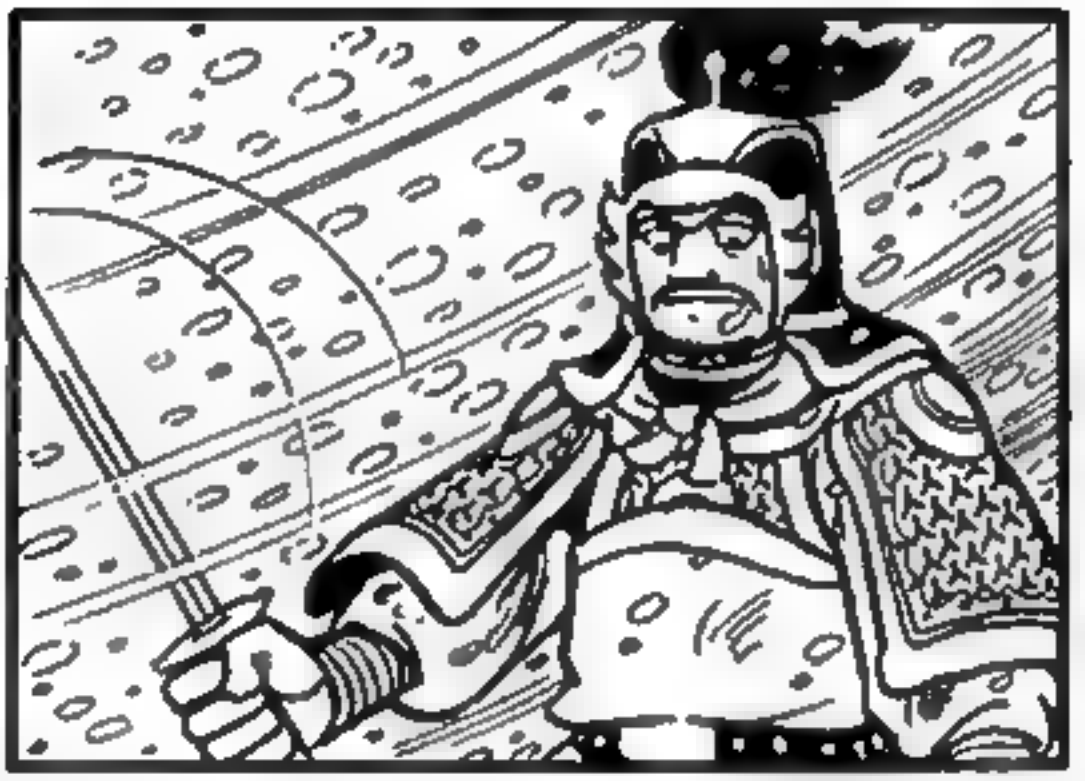
COUGH!
COUGH!

ENOUGH LOITERING AROUND! THE ENEMIES MIGHT CATCH UP TO US ANY MOMENT NOW!

HANDS ARE... SO NUMB...

Y-YES, SIR.

OFFICERS! MAKE AN EXAMPLE OUT OF ANY LAZY LOAFERS YOU SEE!

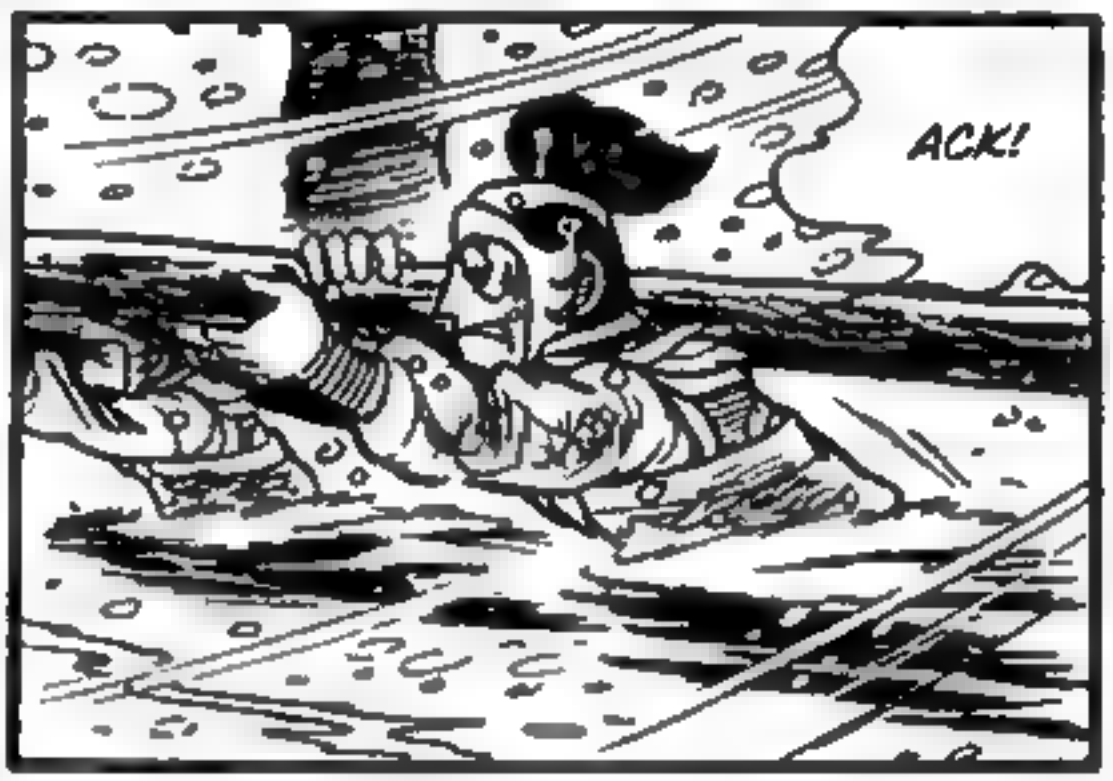


YOU THERE! WAKE UP THIS INSTANT!

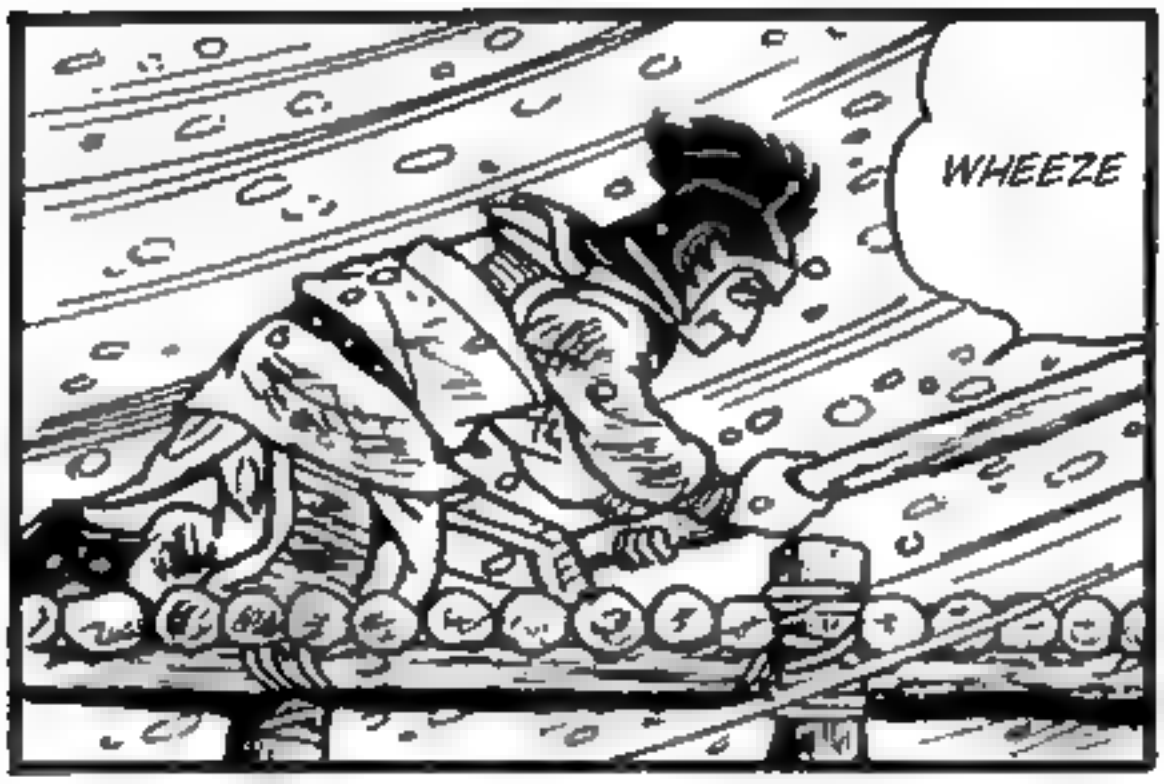
SIR, I CAN'T... MY EYES WON'T...

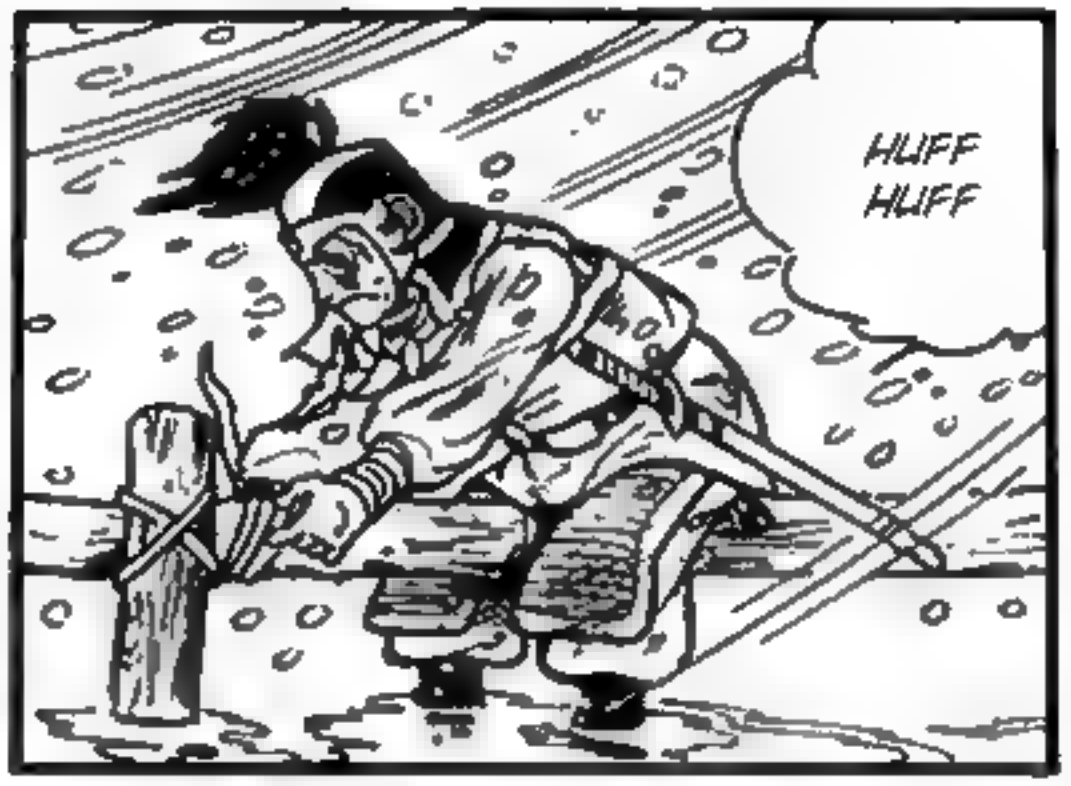
AGHH!

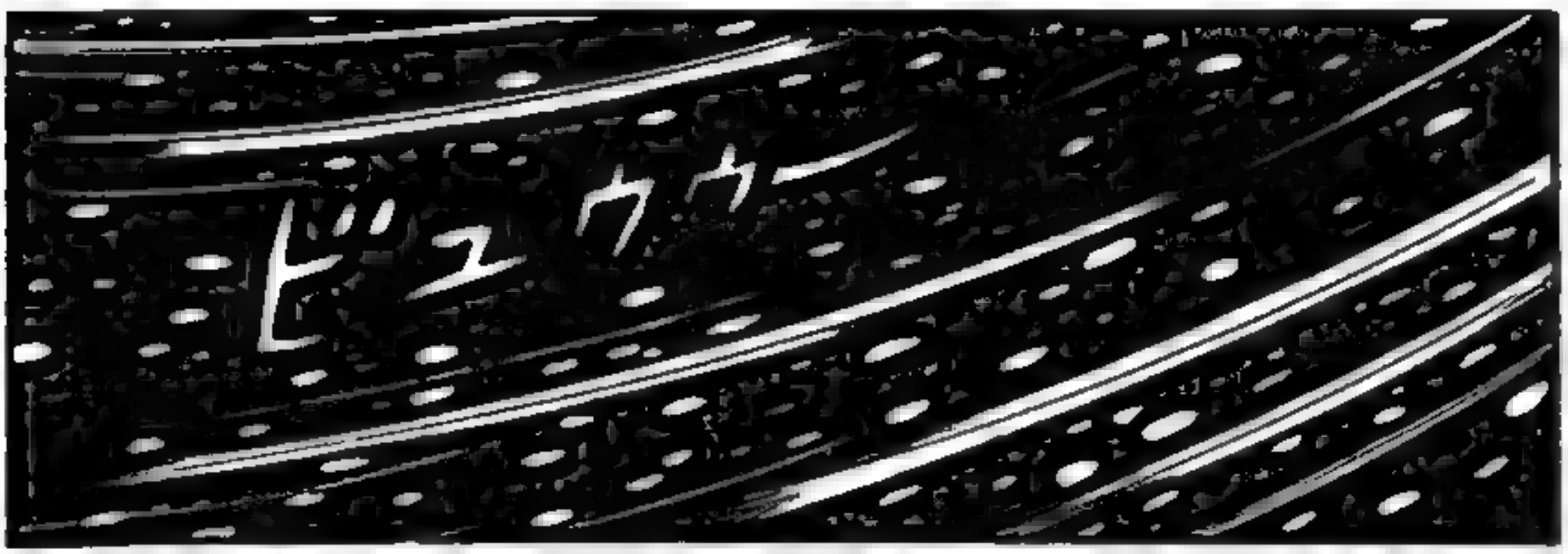
I DON'T MIND DYING IN BATTLE WITH HONOUR BUT DYING A DOG'S DEATH OUT HERE...!?

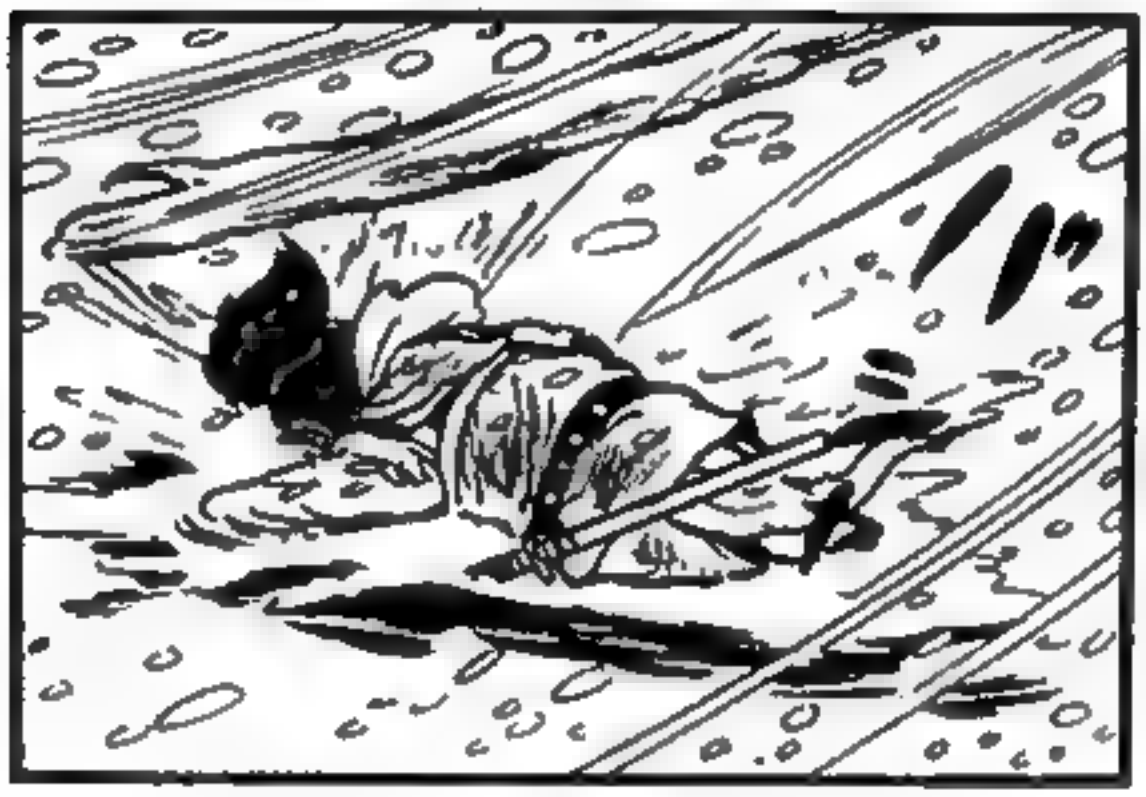

ACK!

IF YOU'VE GOT ENOUGH ENERGY TO COMPLAIN, I SUGGEST YOU USE IT TO FINISH BUILDING THE BRIDGE!


WHEEZE


HUFF
HUFF





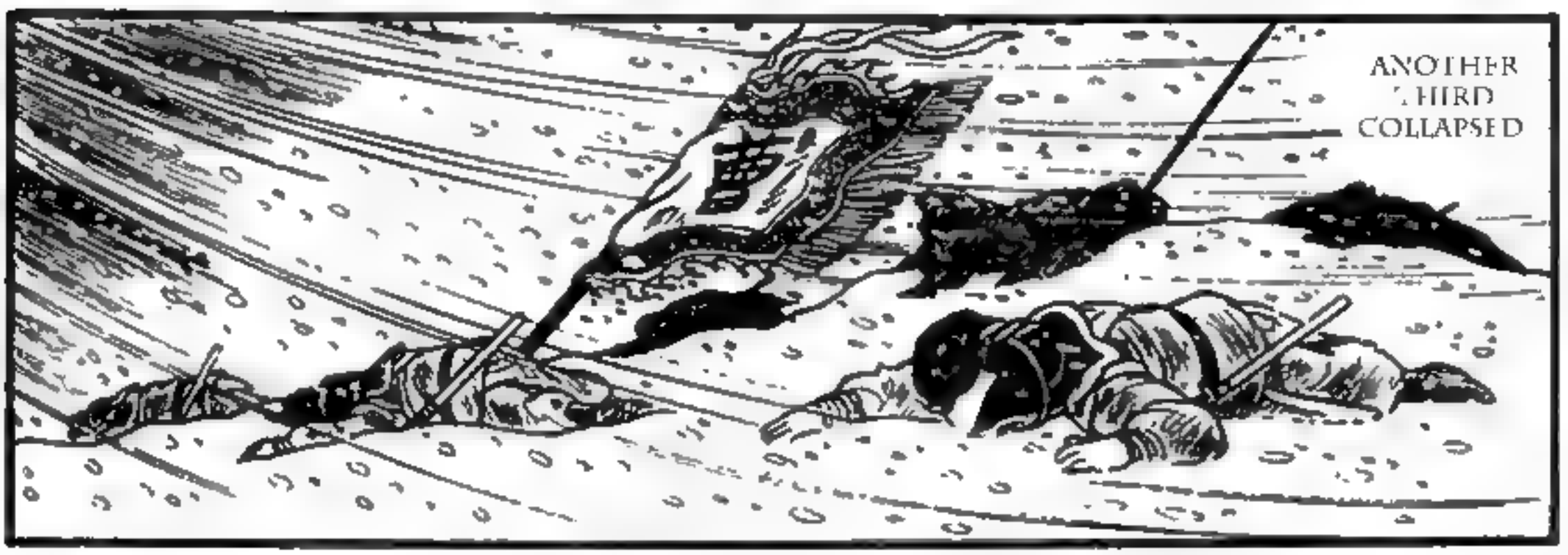
A THIRD OF THE REMAINING SOLDIERS COLLAPSED FROM EXHAUSTION DURING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THIS BRIDGE

WELL DONE, MEN!

THE BRIDGE IS COMPLETE AT LAST, CHANCELLOR!

MADE
THEIR
WAY UP
THE
STEEP
HILLS

AND AS
THE MEN
ONCE
AGAIN


ANOTHER
THIRD
COLLAPSED

AFTER FINALLY
RETURNING TO LEVEL
ROAD, A MERE 300
SOLDIERS REMAINED

FRUITLESS AMBUSH

HAD THEY BEEN WISE ENOUGH TO DO SO, WE WOULD HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO SURRENDER.
WE SHOULD AT LEAST BE GLAD THAT OUR ENEMIES WEREN'T SMART ENOUGH TO PLACE ANOTHER AMBUSH HERE.

ヒュウ
HM?

GUAN YU!?

WE'RE DONE FOR!

AHH!

I'M AFRAID THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE, CHANCELLOR.

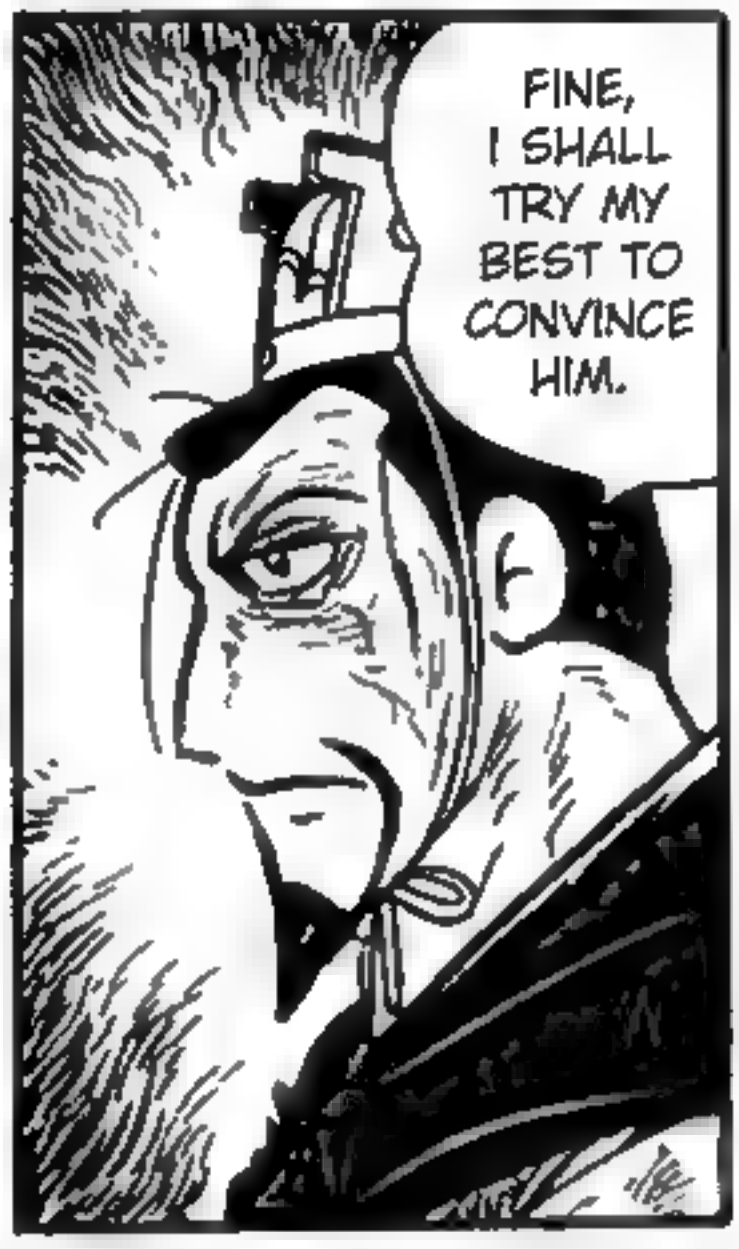
GET UP, MEN! LET US AT LEAST FIGHT TO THE DEATH WITH HONOUR!

OUR TROOPS LACK EVEN THE STRENGTH TO STAND UP, MUCH LESS FIGHT.

曹
YES, THE ENTIRE WORLD KNOWS THAT.
CHANCELLOR, GUAN YU IS COLD TO THE ARROGANT BUT HUMBLE TO THE WEAK. HE VALUES HONOUR AND VIRTUE FAR MORE THAN HIS OWN LIFE, AND NEVER FORGETS THOSE WHO HAVE HELPED HIM.
曹
NOT ONLY DID MY LORD ACCEPT ALL HIS CONDITIONS WHEN HE SURRENDERED IN THE PAST, BUT YOU EVEN PARDONED HIM FOR SLAYING YOUR GENERALS WHO HINDERED HIS PATH.

HM...

PERHAPS HE COULD BE PERSUADED TO LOOK THE OTHER WAY JUST THIS ONCE...


FINE, I SHALL TRY MY BEST TO CONVINCE HIM.

YES, IT IS GOOD TO SEE THE CHANCELLOR AGAIN.
IT'S BEEN AWHILE, HASN'T IT, GUAN YU?

PLEASE ACCEPT YOUR DEATH WITH DIGNITY AND HONOUR, CHANCELLOR CAO CAO.

IF THIS WERE ANY OTHER CIRCUMSTANCE, I WOULD LIKE NOTHING MORE THAN TO ENJOY A TALK OVER WINE. ALAS, I AM HERE ON STRICT ORDERS FROM MY COMMANDER.

I UNDERSTAND YOUR DUTIES WELL, GUAN YU, AND AS A WARRIOR MYSELF, I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN PREPARED TO DIE IN BATTLE ONE DAY. BUT CALL IT A MAN'S DREAMS OR STUBBORNNESS, I CANNOT HELP BUT DESIRE JUST A LITTLE MORE TIME AMONG THE LIVING. AND SO, I BEG OF YOU TO RECALL MY KINDNESS OF FORMER DAYS...

ALTHOUGH IT IS TRUE THAT I HAVE BEEN INDEBTED TO SIR IN THE PAST, I BELIEVE I HAVE REPAID MY DEBTS BY SLAYING YAN LIANG AND WEN CHOU AT THE FIELDS OF BAIMA.

HOWEVER, I ASK OF YOU TO RECALL THE TIME YOU BROKE THROUGH FIVE OF MY PASSES.

YES, I REMEMBER HOW YOU WON US THE BATTLE AT BAIMA.

DESPITE ALL THAT, I STILL PARDONED YOU AND KEPT ALL OF MY PROMISES.

BECAUSE YOU DID NOT CARRY THE IMPERIAL PASS, YOU SLAYED 6 OF MY GENERALS ON YOUR WAY TO REUNITE WITH LIU BEI.

NO, OF COURSE NOT. MY LORD HAS NO INTENTION OF BREAKING HIS PROMISE TO YOU. HE IS COMING HERE RIGHT NOW SO HE CAN PERSONALLY SAY GOOD BYE.

WELL, IF IT ISN'T ZHANG LIAO. HAVE YOU COME TO ARREST ME?

SEE FOR YOURSELF.

HE'S COMING HERE HIMSELF!?

MY APOLOGIES BUT I RECEIVED WORD THAT MY LORD IS AT HEBEI.

A RATHER HASTY DEPARTURE, IS THIS NOT, GUAN YU?

YES, YES, OF COURSE. I AM A MAN OF MY WORD.

THE FIRST CONDITION WAS THAT I WOULD BE SURRENDERING TO THE EMPEROR OF HAN AND NOT PERSONALLY TO YOU, CHANCELLOR. THE SECOND WAS TO ENSURE THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF MY LORD'S WIFE. AND THE FINAL CONDITION WAS TO LET ME RETURN AS SOON AS I KNEW WHERE MY LORD WAS.

WHEN I SURRENDERED, YOU ACCEPTED ALL 3 OF MY CONDITIONS.

I FOOLISHLY THOUGHT THAT BY DOING SO, I COULD KEEP YOU WITH ME LONGER. BUT GOOD-BYES ARE INEVITABLE AND I WISH TO MAKE OURS A MEMORABLE ONE, AT THE VERY LEAST.

BUT I MUST APOLOGIZE FOR REFUSING TO MEET YOU THESE PAST FEW DAYS.

PLEASE, ACCEPT THIS BAG OF GOLD AND SILVER TO HELP COVER YOUR TRAVEL EXPENSES.

THAT IS NOT NECCESSARY, SIR. YOU HAVE HELPED ME MORE THAN I DESERVE ALREADY.

FOR MILADY...?

PLEASE. IF NOT FOR YOURSELF, THEN FOR YOUR MILADY.

THANK YOU SIR, I AM MOST GRATEFUL.

YES, PLEASE. IT IS THE LEAST I CAN DO FOR HER.

AS FOR YOU, I PRESENT A TRAVEL ROBE. I HOPE YOU CAN SET ASIDE YOUR MODESTY FOR NOW AND ACCEPT THIS, LEST I LOSE FACE.

HOW DARE HE ACCEPT THE CHANCELLOR'S GIFT WITH A BLADE...!

FAREWELL, CHANCELLOR CAO CAO. I SHAN'T FORGET SIR'S KINDNESS.

DO NOT OVER-REACT.

THAT GUAN YU KNOWS NO ETIQUETTE!

MY LORD! HOW CAN YOU JUST ALLOW HIM TO DISRESPECT YOU!?

THERE IS ONLY ONE OF HIM AND 20 OF US, AND AT THE END OF THE DAY, WE ARE FOES ON DIFFERENT SIDES. IT IS ONLY NATURAL FOR HIM TO BE CAUTIOUS.

LIU BEI, WORDS CANNOT EXPRESS HOW ENVIOUS I AM OF YOU...!

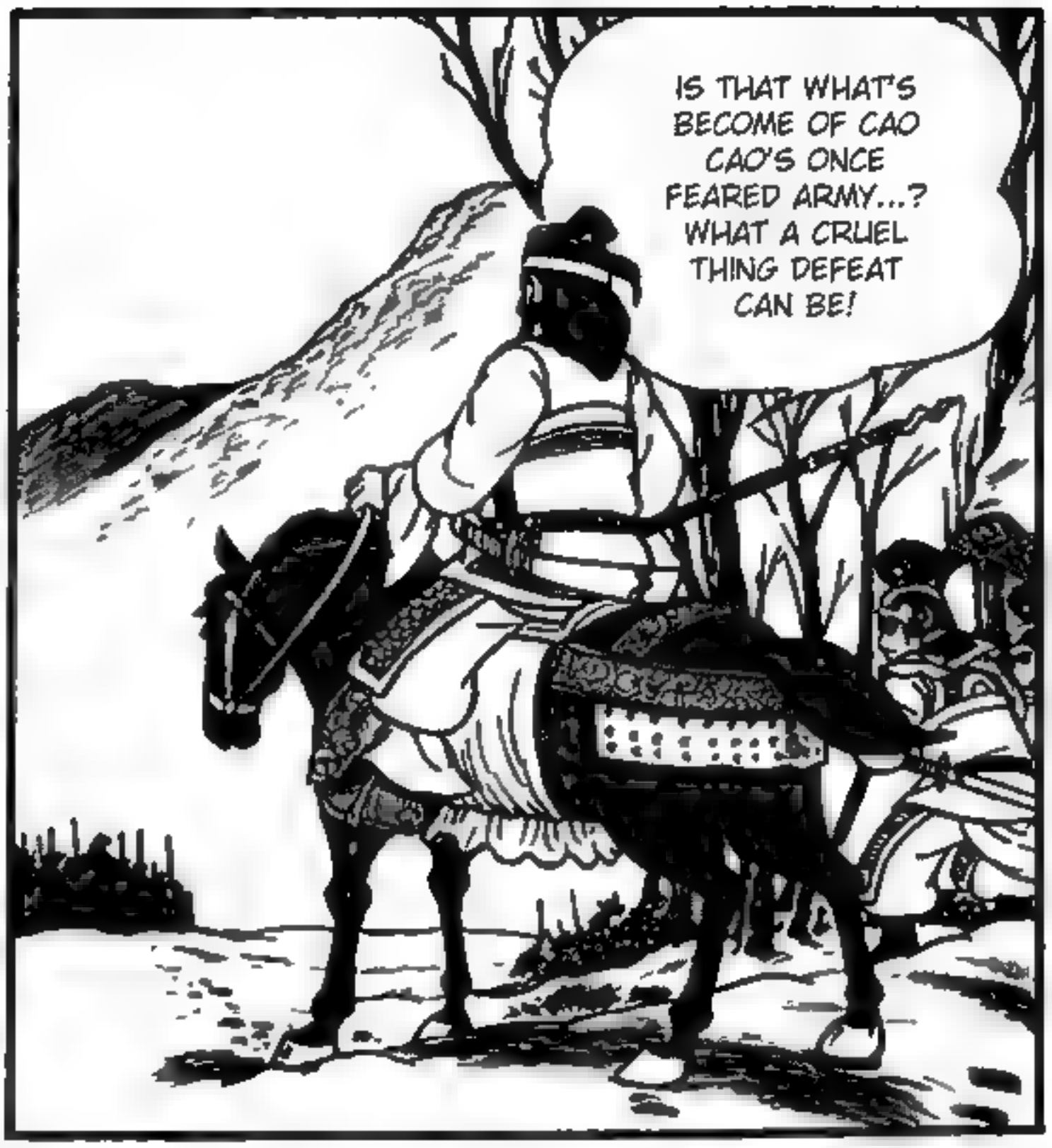
SIGH...

I CANNOT BRING MYSELF TO KILL THESE MEN...

SUCH IS THE BOND THAT TIES A LORD AND HIS RETAINERS...
DESPITE ALL THE HARDSHIPS THEY'VE SUFFERED THROUGH, THESE MEN STILL BEG FOR THEIR LORD TO BE SPARED...

IS HE TELING US TO ESCAPE ...?
QUICKLY, MEN!

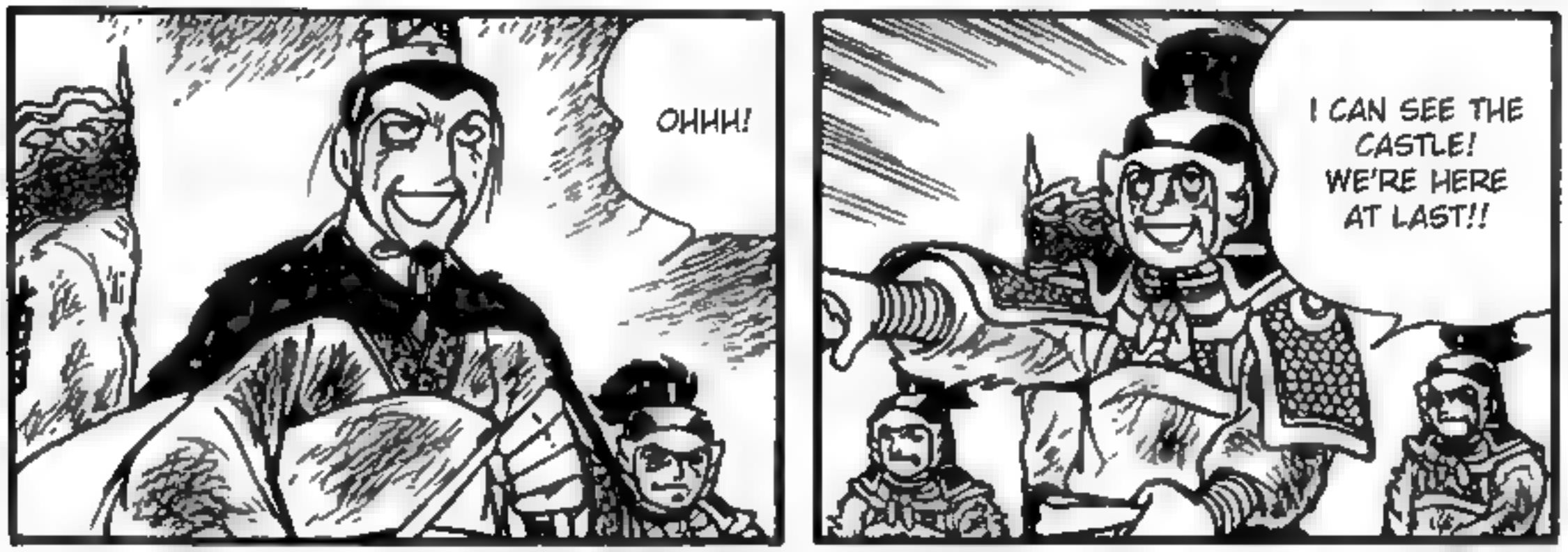
WE SHALL HEREBY RETREAT BACK TO BASE!

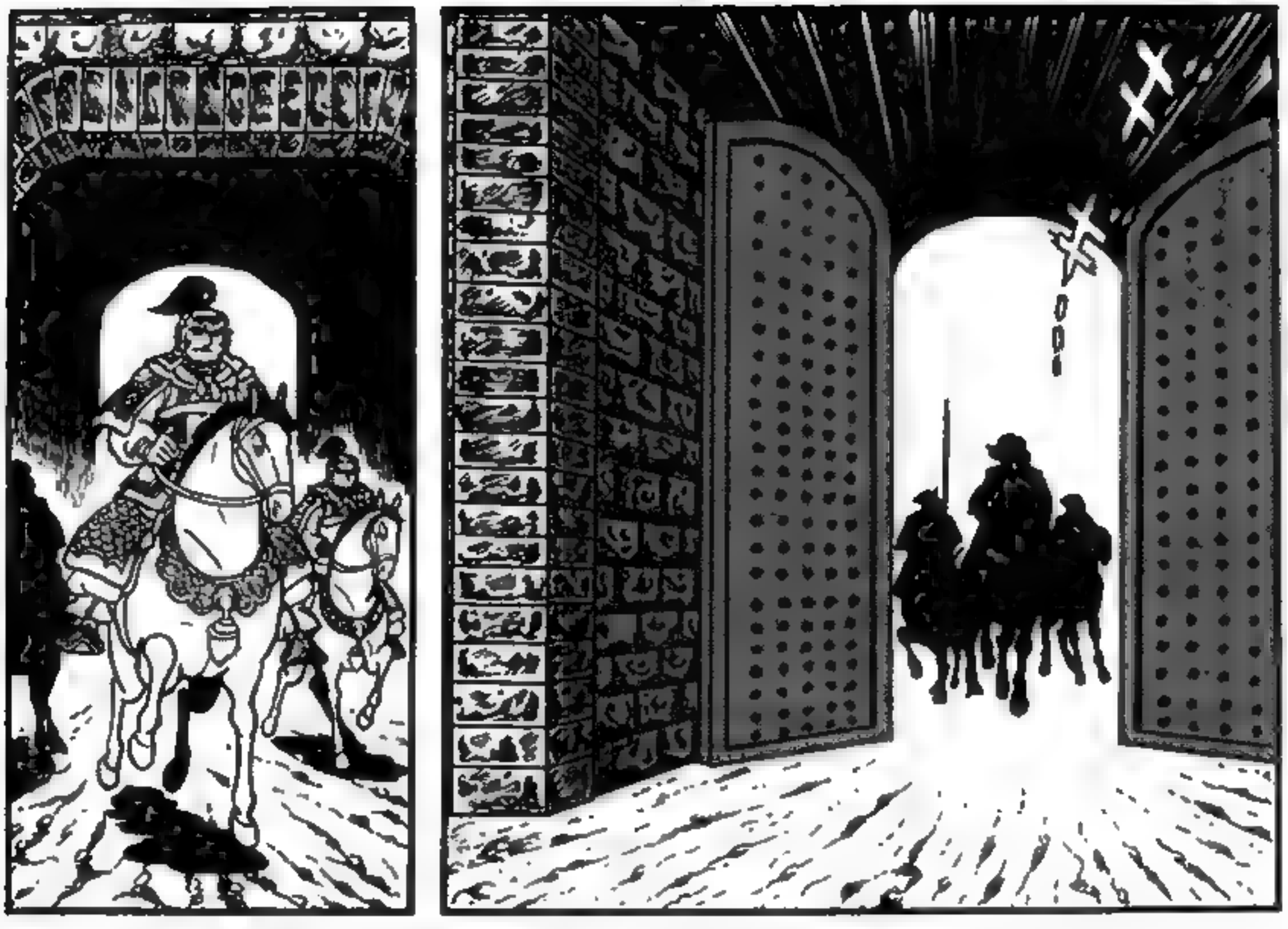

IS THAT WHAT'S BECOME OF CAO CAO'S ONCE FEARED ARMY...? WHAT A CRUEL THING DEFEAT CAN BE!

HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

HUFF
HUFF

YES, OF COURSE...
CHANCELLOR, WE ARE NEARLY AT NANJUN, WHICH SHOULD BE GUARDED BY GENERAL CAO REN. PLEASE BEAR WITH THE FATIGUE JUST A LITTLE LONGER.


OHHH!
I CAN SEE THE CASTLE! WE'RE HERE AT LAST!!



AH, CAO REN!
CHANCELLOR! ARE YOU ALRIGHT, CHANCELLOR!?

AGAINST ALL ODDS, I'VE SOMEHOW MANAGED TO ESCAPE WITH MY LIFE AT LEAST.

WHEN I HEARD OF THE DISASTER AT RED CLIFFS, I WISHED NOTHING MORE THAN TO COME OUT AND SEARCH FOR YOU, BUT I COULD NOT RISK LEAVING NANJUN EMPTY. AND SO, I'VE BEEN PRAYING NIGHT AND DAY FOR SIR'S WELL BEING.

MY TROOPS HAVE HARDLY HAD ANY FOOD OR SLEEP THESE PAST THREE DAYS SO WE SHALL RECOVER HERE FIRST BEFORE TAKING FURTHER ACTION.

YES, SIR!
GO MAKE PREPARATIONS TO FEED THESE VALIANT SOLDIERS RIGHT AWAY!

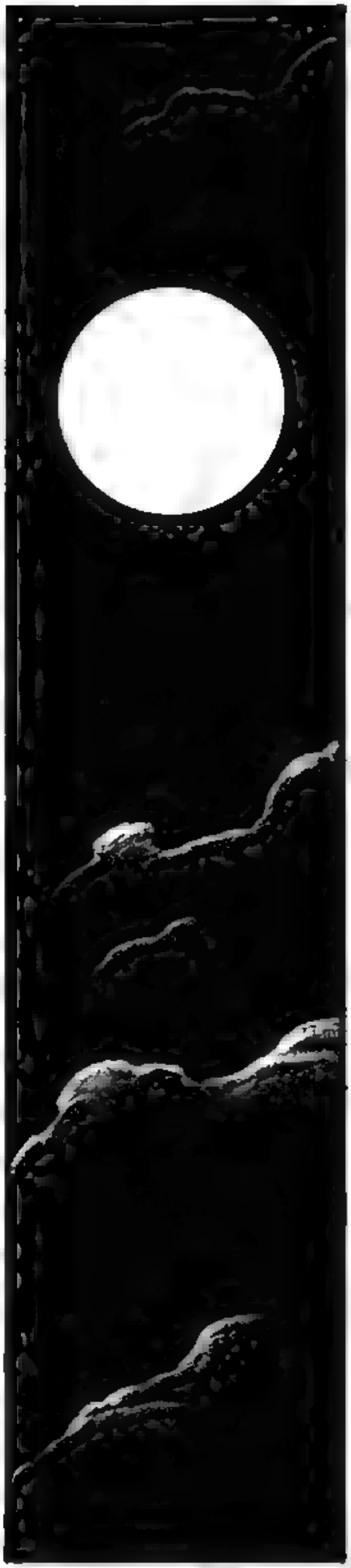
YES, SIR.

I VOW TO HAVE MY REVENGE ONE DAY...
TO THINK MY FORCES COULD EVER BE REDUCED TO SUCH A PITIFUL STATE AS THIS...

MNN...

AGHHH!

WHAT IS IT, CHANCEL-LOR!?

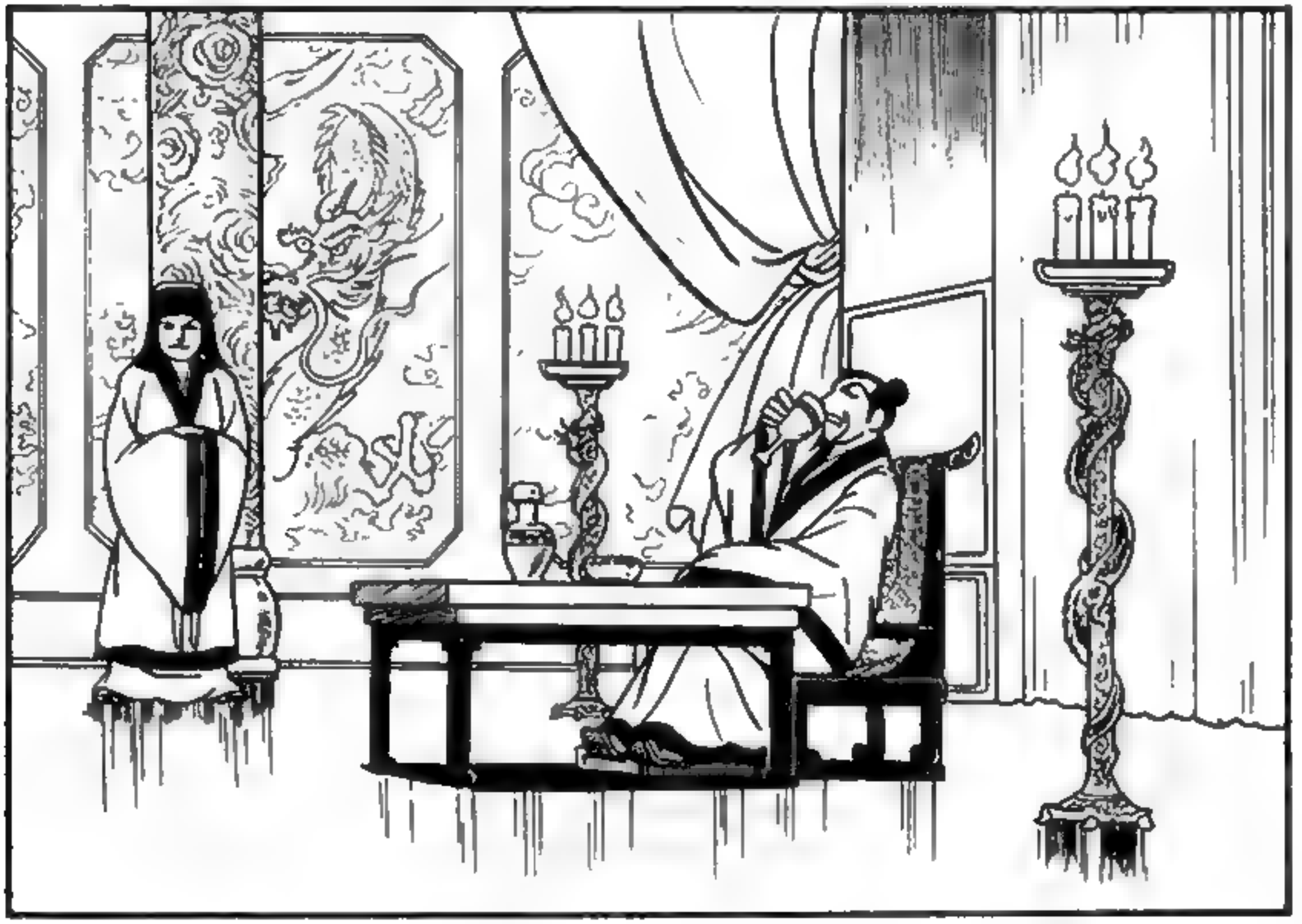


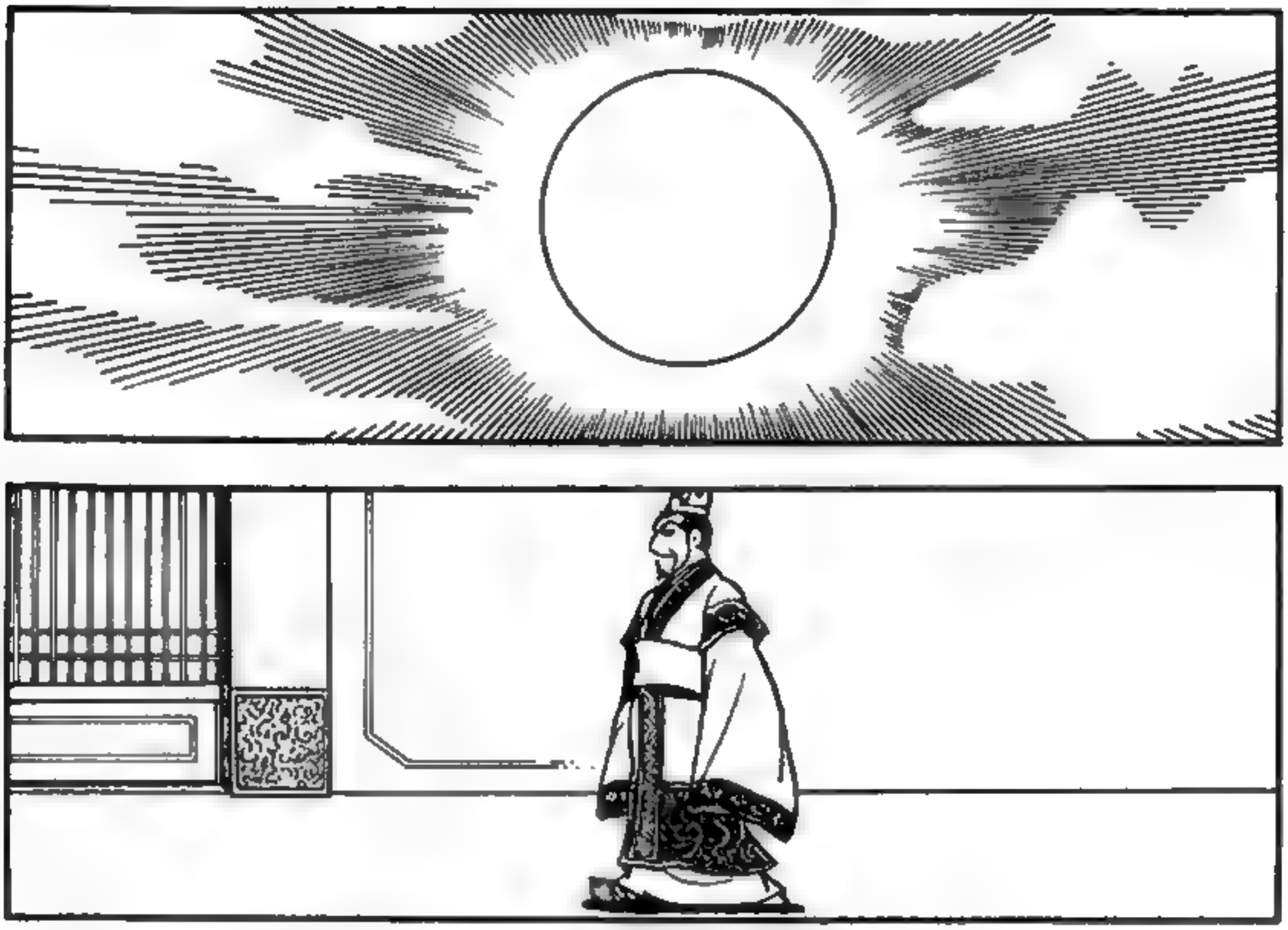
SO IT WAS JUST A DREAM...

AH-

YES, SIR.
GO BRING ME A GLASS OF WINE.

WORRY NOT, ONLY HAD A LITTLE NIGHTMARE, THAT'S ALL.




YES, AND I'VE FULLY REGAINED MY STRENGTH AT LAST.
AH, HAS THE CHANCELLOR FINALLY AWOKEN?

YES, THEY'RE ONLY WAITING FOR YOUR PRESENCE, CHANCELLOR.
HAVE YOU CALLED THE MEN YET?

IT IS GOOD TO SEE ALL OF YOU STILL ALIVE AND WELL.

OUR GREAT LOSS AT RED CLIFFS WAS ENTIRELY DUE TO MY NEGLIGENCE. I BEG FOR YOUR FORGIVENESS AND GIVE MY DEEPEST APOLOGIES TO THOSE WHO PASSED AWAY IN BATTLE.

I SHALL NEVER FORGET THIS DEFEAT FOR AS LONG AS I LIVE. I SWEAR I SHALL CLEANSE AWAY MY DISGRACE BY TAKING REVENGE IN THE FUTURE.

AND SO, FOR THE TIME BEING, WE MUST FOCUS ENTIRELY ON GUARDING OUR SOUTHERN BORDERS.

BUT FIRST, I MUST REORGANIZE OUR FORCES BACK AT THE CAPITAL.

DEFEND NANJUN AT ALL COSTS.

YES?

CAO REN.

YES, SIR.

YES, SIR.

OUR ENEMIES WILL SOON COME STORMING TO NANJUN BUT YOU ARE ***NOT*** TO GO OUTSIDE THIS CASTLE AND FIGHT BACK.

?

I WROTE THIS LAST NIGHT FOR YOU.

XIAHOU DUN!

YES, SIR.

OPEN IT WHEN THIS CASTLE IS HARD-PRESSED, FOR WRITTEN IN IT IS A WAY TO REPEL THE ENEMIES.

YES?

YES, SIR!

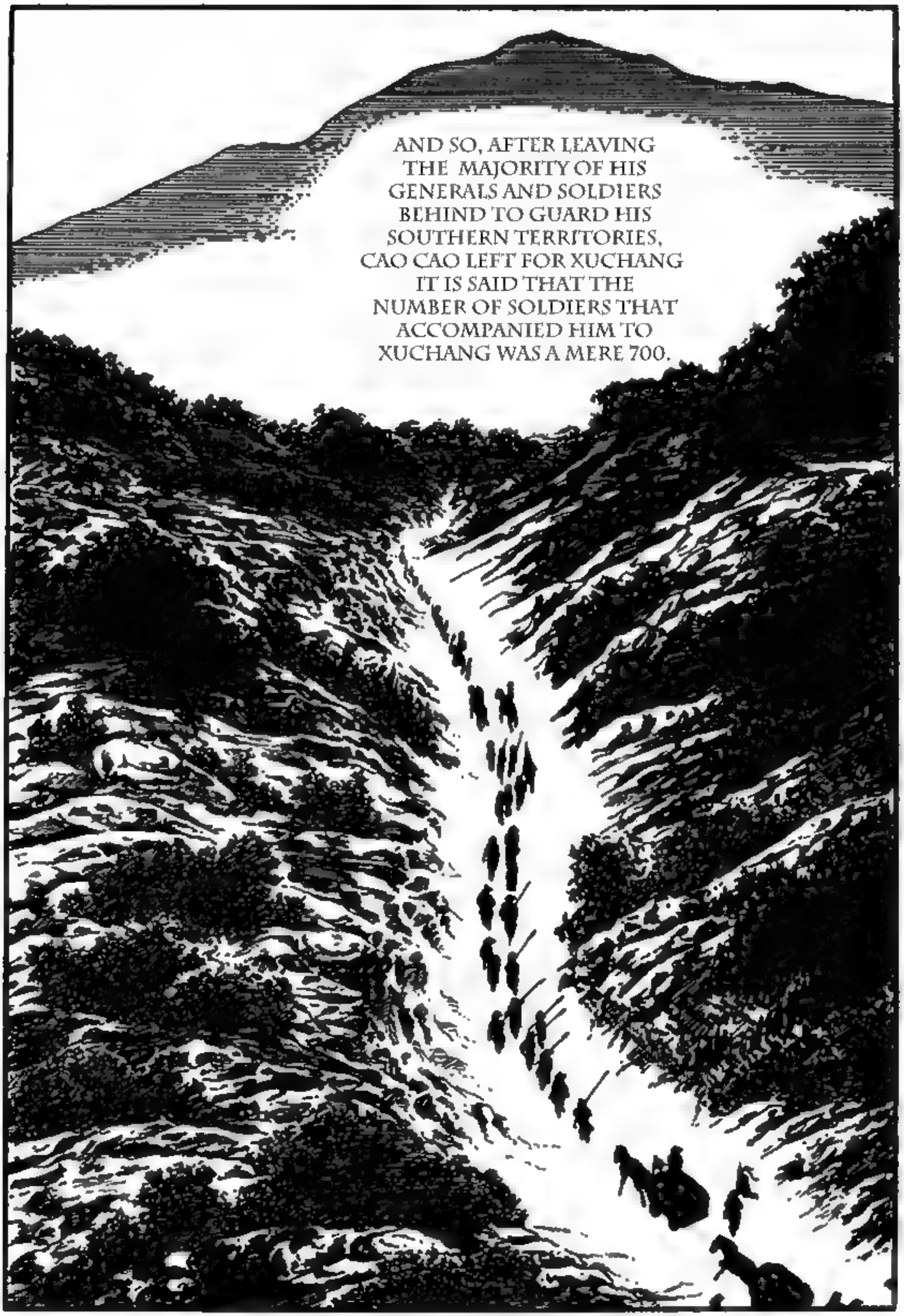
YOU ARE TO GUARD XIANGYANG.

YES?

ZHANG LIAO.

UNDERSTOOD, CHANCELLOR.
I LEAVE THE DEFENSE OF HEFEI IN YOUR HANDS. LI DIAN AND YUE JING SHALL SERVE AS YOUR SECOND-IN-COMMAND.

AS FOR THE REST, YOU SHALL COME WITH ME TO XUCHANG.


AND SO, AFTER LEAVING
THE MAJORITY OF HIS
GENERALS AND SOLDIERS
BEHIND TO GUARD HIS
SOUTHERN TERRITORIES,
CAO CAO LEFT FOR XUCHANG
IT IS SAID THAT THE
NUMBER OF SOLDIERS THAT
ACCOMPANIED HIM TO
XUCHANG WAS A MERE 700.

MEANWHILE,
IN XIAKOU..

THE EUPHORIC
CHEERS OF
VICTORY
CONTINUED
ON ENDLESSLY.

WHILE THE
SCRIBES
BUSIED
THEMSELVES
RECORDING
ALL THE
BENEFICES
GIVEN TO
GENERALS AND
OFFICERS
FOR THEIR
SUCCESSES

THE SOLDIERS BRAGGED TO EACH OTHER ABOUT THEIR ACCOMPLISH-MENTS

IT WAS DURING THESE CHEERFUL FESTIVITIES THAT GUAN YU AND HIS TROOPS RETURNED.

AH, WE'VE BEEN EAGERLY WAITING FOR YOU TO ARRIVE, GENERAL.

GUAN YU!

I ASSUME YOU'VE BROUGHT ALONG CAO CAO'S HEAD, RIGHT?

I...

PLEASE, TELL US OF YOUR GREAT ACCOM-PLISHMENT SO THE SCRIBES CAN RECORD IT DOWN.

I'VE COME HERE TODAY NOT TO REPORT TO YOU ON MY SUCCESSES BUT RATHER TO ACCEPT MY PUNISHMENT ACCORDING TO MILITARY LAW.

NO, THAT'S NOT IT. CAO CAO CAME BEFORE ME AT HUARONG VALLEY, JUST AS YOU SAID HE WOULD.

PUNISHMENT? WHATEVER DO YOU MEAN, GENERAL? DID CAO CAO NOT FLEE TO HUARONG VALLEY?

YOU FAILED TO KILL HIM?

HOWEVER, I FAILED TO CUT HIM DOWN DUE TO MY INCOMPETENCE.

NO, THAT'S NOT QUITE HOW IT WAS...

AFTER SUFFERING AMBUSH AFTER AMBUSH AND DEFEAT AFTER DEFEAT, THE EXHAUSTED, INJURED, AND DISPIRITED ENEMIES RESISTED FIERCELY ENOUGH FOR YOU, THE GREAT GENERAL, TO FAIL...?

NONE...

WELL, IT IS UNDER-STANDABLE HOW CAO CAO, BEING A SINGLE HUMAN, COULD HAVE ESCAPED DURING THE CHAOS OF BATTLE. BUT TELL ME, GENERAL, HOW MANY ENEMIES DID YOU AT LEAST SLAY?

NOT A SINGLE ONE.

NOT EVEN A SINGLE SOLDIER...?

GENERAL!

I SEE...

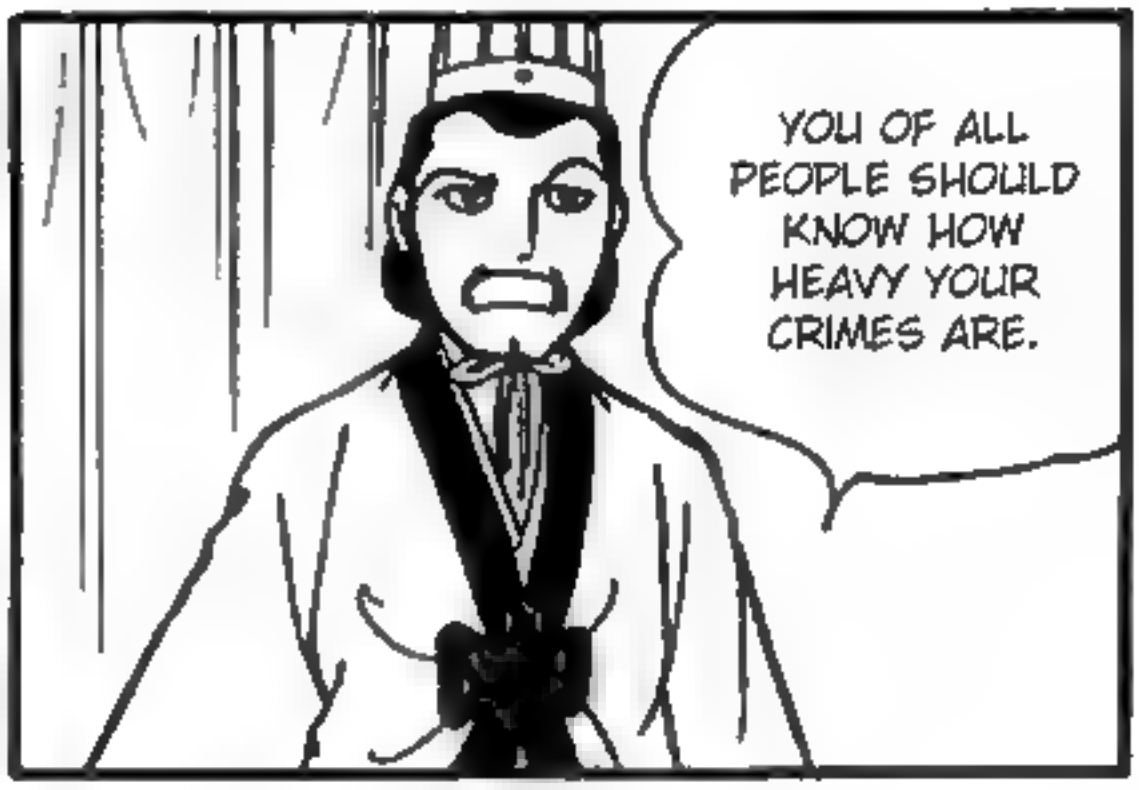
YOU PURPOSELY LET CAO CAO AND HIS MEN ESCAPE BECAUSE YOU STILL FELT INDEBTED TO HIM, DID YOU NOT!?

GENERAL! DO YOU THINK A PUNISHMENT WOULD SOLVE EVERYTHING!?

WHAT DIFFERENCE WOULD UTTERING ANY EXCUSES MAKE AT THIS POINT? PLEASE PUNISH ME AS YOU WILL.

THIS BATTLE WE HAVE JUST FOUGHT WAS ONE OF MOST CRITICAL IMPORTANCE, AND ONE WHICH MIGHT HAVE EASILY LED TO BOTH WU'S AND OUR ANNHILATION! AND YET YOU DARE LET YOUR TRIVIAL EMOTIONS GET THE BETTER OF YOU AND FAIL TO CARRY OUT YOUR DUTIES!?

EVERYTHING MAY HAVE TURNED OUT ALRIGHT THIS TIME BUT SUPPOSE IT HADN'T! JUST THINK HOW MANY OF OUR MEN WOULD HAVE BEEN MERCILESSLY SLAUGHTERED!


YOU OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW HOW HEAVY YOUR CRIMES ARE.

GUARDS! OFF WITH GUAN YU'S HEAD!

KONGMING, WAIT!

GUAN YU AND I HAVE SWORN AN OATH OF BROTHERHOOD, PROMISING THAT WE WOULD LIVE TOGETHER AND DIE TOGETHER. EXECUTING GUAN YU IS TO KILL ME AS WELL.

I KNOW WHAT GUAN YU DID WAS A MOST GRAVE OFFENSE BUT I BEG OF YOU TO PLEASE PARDON HIM JUST THIS ONCE...

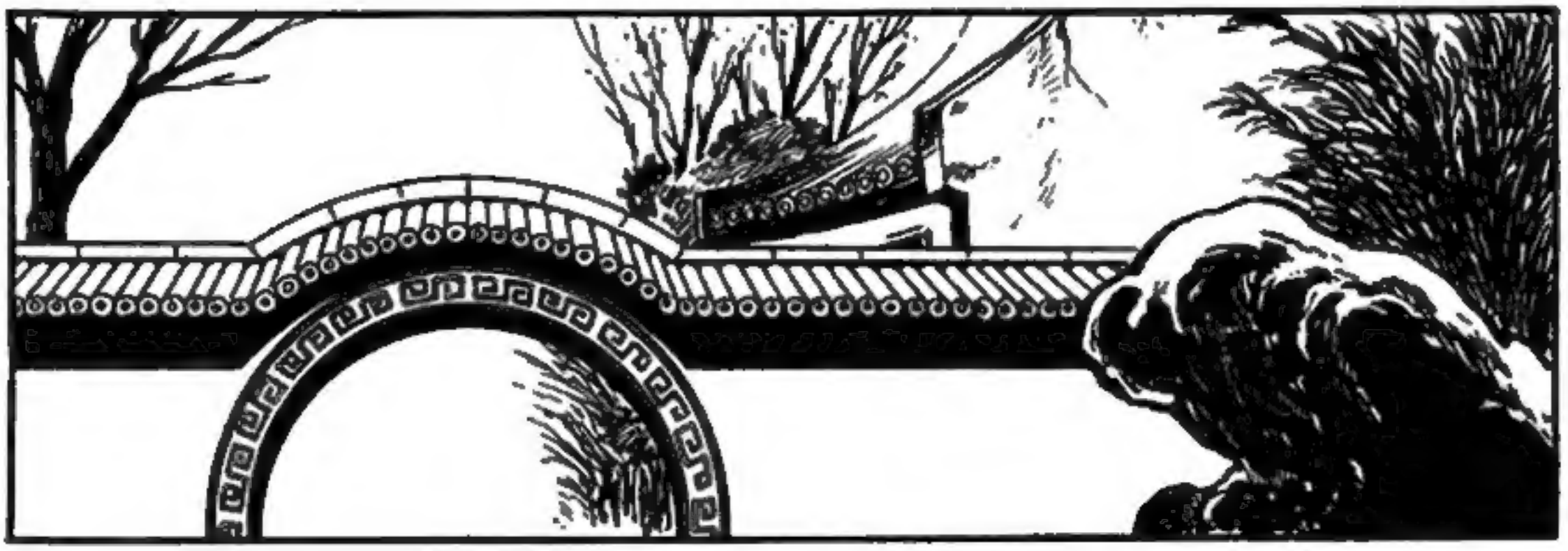
THE LAW IS WRITTEN FOR A REASON AND NO MAN IS ABOVE IT.

I PROMISE YOU THAT HE'LL MAKE UP FOR HIS MISTAKE BY BRINGING MANY VICTORIES IN THE FUTURE.

BUT IF MY LORD IS WILLING TO GO SO FAR AS TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS FAILURE, THEN I SUPPOSE I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO LOOK THE OTHER WAY JUST THIS ONCE.

YES, MY LORD.

GUAN YU, YOU ARE EXCUSED FOR TODAY.



THEN DON'T YOU THINK IT TO BE RATHER CRUEL TO EXECUTE A MAN FOR FAILING TO DO WHAT IS NOT POSSIBLE...?

YES, I DID.
KONGMING, DIDN'T YOU ALREADY PREDICT THAT GUAN YU WOULD BE UNABLE TO KILL CAO CAO...?

AH YES, BUT YOU STOPPED ME, DID YOU NOT?

IF NOT MY LORD, THEN ZHANG FEI WOULD HAVE STOPPED ME. IF NOT ZHANG FEI, THEN ZHAO ZILONG OR SOMEONE ELSE...

FOR ONLY WHEN MILITARY LAWS ARE FOLLOWED CAN STRONG ARMIES BE RAISED. AND ONLY WHEN STRONG ARMIES ARE RAISED, CAN A NATION BE DEFENDED AND ALLOWED TO PROSPER.

TRANSLATED BY HOX

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三国志

26

横山 光輝

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